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THE USE OF THE FAMILY AS A DEVICE
IN SOME EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PERIODICALS

by



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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The Use of the Family As a Device in Some Eighteenth-Century Periodicals," submitted by Susan Estelle Lieberman in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

Periodical endeavors flourished in eighteenth-century London because of the rapid growth of the city and of the literate middle-class which included women as part of the reading public. Since competition among the periodicals was keen, many writers, to attract public attention and interest, based their work on a fictitious framework. The periodical writers whose works form the basis of my study created fictitious families to entertain and instruct their readers. The Tatler was the innovator of the use of the family as device, the Guardian was its chief exponent, and the Lay Monk, the Grumbler, and the Prater added new dimensions to its use.

The editor of each paper assumes the role of a guardian or father figure to a number of relatives or wards. He is then able to introduce members of his family circle, to give advice, and to discuss their problems and activities. Isaac Bickerstaff, the fictitious editor of the Tatler, has one close relation, his sister Jenny, while Nestor Ironside of the Guardian has the nine children of Lady Lizard as his wards. The Lay Monk is supposedly published by a brotherhood of single men who are affiliated with a sisterhood of single women, and it combines elements of the fictitious club and family. Like Bickerstaff, Nicholas Babble of the Prater has only one close ward, Harriot Aimwell; and although Squire Gizzard of the Grumbler has many close relations, none are highly developed

characters.

The editors introduce topics through the family in a variety of ways. A topic can be stimulated by a philosophical parlour discussion on happiness or beauty, a family argument over the merits of a particular play, or by observations of the editor upon the activities of his wards. Through identifying himself with the members of the family the reader is led to discover appropriate or inappropriate behaviour and, generally, to improve his knowledge and taste. Letters to or from members of the family are used as the basis for many papers and, in the Tatler, Jenny even writes many papers herself. The family device thus helps the writers avoid overt didacticism. At the same time the fiction gave the true editors a degree of anonymity which provided both protection from direct criticism and a source of curiosity amongst colleagues and the reading public.

A great potential advantage that these periodicals had over periodicals such as the Spectator, which used the club as a device, was that the family was able to include both men and women of widely different ages and interests. As it happens, however, none of them achieve the success of the Spectator because their characters cannot rival such figures as Sir Roger de Coverley or Will Honeycomb. The family device did, nevertheless, make topics especially relevant to readers then by providing a universal frame of reference and it still contributes greatly to the general readability of the papers. Although the magazine, the newspaper column, and the novel all

contributed to the demise of the literary periodical toward the end of the eighteenth century, the family device itself was capable of greatest development within the pages of the novel. Considered as a group the papers which used the family as a device added variety to the approach of periodicals. They made a valuable contribution to literary journalism by enabling their editors to fulfil their entertaining and instructive ends.

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CHAPTER I

THE LITERARY CONTEXT OF THE FAMILY DEVICE

The literary periodicals I propose to examine are the Tatler with two hundred seventy-one numbers published from April 12, 1709 to January 2, 1711, the Guardian with one hundred seventy-five numbers published from March 12, 1713 to October 1, 1713, the Lay Monk with forty numbers published from November 1713 to February 1714, and two minor periodicals, the Grumbler with thirty-four numbers published from February to July 1715, and the Prater, of only thirty-five numbers published in 1756. They appeared at a time when periodicals were flourishing in England, particularly in London. The use of a persona or fictitious mask by the periodical editors arose to meet the needs of a highly competitive public press. The club became the most widely used and successful contrived framework, and the editors of the periodicals which used the club as a device were able to hide, in varying degrees, behind the masks of its members at the same time as they were able to attract and maintain public interest. The family device was one of the variations which arose from the club device; it, too, was aimed at attracting and maintaining public interest. As the literary advantages of the device became more and more apparent, editors explored and developed its potential. This thesis seeks to

show how the family arose as a device and to examine the extent, nature, success, and effects of its use. In so doing, we shall see the influence of the development of the periodical press on its social and cultural milieu, and also, its mirroring of the urbane, socially conscious Augustan age of which it was an integral part.

Let us first consider the nature and literary position of periodical writing in the eighteenth century. The periodical as an independent form of publishing enterprise may be broadly defined, as Richmond P. Bond in his "Introduction" to Studies in the Early English Periodical has defined it, without regard for its potential subject matter:

The periodical is usually a series of numbered and dated issues produced under a continuing title on a definite frequency for an indefinite period. . . . The periodical is a publishing enterprise with editorial problems of contents and methods and deadlines, with business problems of production and circulation and solvency. Every issue of a periodical is a unit in serialization subject to the limitations and challenges of date, length, format, audience, purpose, material, techniques, editorship, authorship, and temper of the time; every number is a part of a whole.¹

As a serial with a pre-established form it is committed to a continuity and over-all unity not expected in pamphlets, yet it need not be committed to the degree of immediacy and topicality required of newspapers. The mechanical limitations of such a form favoured ingenuity and experiment; they became challenges for those who endeavoured to raise the periodic press to a literary status of scope and value beyond the range of mere journalism.

Because the eighteenth century is so generally regarded as the great age of the literary periodical, its earlier critics have

tended to neglect or ignore the factors which favored its growth and popularity. The 1823 edition of The British Essayists introduces the Tatler with a preface by the Reverend Lionel Berguer who makes such fantastic and over-simplified claims for Steele's major work that it appears that the Tatler was born completely free of external stimuli, either historical or literary. With all due respect for the merit of Steele's work, which will soon be considered, let us look at Berguer's claim:

Without any external suggestion, but depending entirely upon his own powers, and unbacked by one literary alliance, did Steele project and put forth his 'Tatler.' The effect upon the town was electrical. It seemed all at once as if the barriers between learning and ignorance were thrown down, and the thousand gates of knowledge flung wide open to universal information and inquiry. . . . The idea of mixing criticism with politics, and pressing periodicity into the service of manners and morals, was reserved for the conception and philanthropy of Steele.²

Precursors of the eighteenth-century literary periodical were admittedly few and relatively unsuccessful, but their existence cannot be overlooked. What is just as significant, the literary periodical grew out of conditions both literary and non-literary.

The history of the periodical begins in the seventeenth century when, between the years 1620 and 1700, seven hundred newspapers and periodicals were printed and at least temporarily in circulation.³ Although most of the periodicals published were unsuccessful and had very short lives, some continued into the eighteenth century. For example, the Oxford Gazette of 1665, later to become the London Gazette, which was edited in the early eighteenth century by Steele, and the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society,

begun in that same year, have continued into our present age. But gazettes were mainly concerned with news, and the seventeenth-century periodicals concerned with broader and more diverse areas of interest were neither received with any considerable encouragement, nor did they attain anything comparable to the polished prose style of many in the following century. Most of the mid-century periodicals such as the numerous mercuries dealt primarily with politics and polemics, but others such as Philosophical Collections, 1669, Weekly Memorials for the Ingenuous, 1682, The Universal Historical Bibliothèque, 1687, and the Momus Ridens, 1690, which with the English Lucien of 1698 departmentalized its content,⁴ dealt with social interests and areas of the humanities in enough depth to enter, at least, the realm of classification known as literary journalism. References which follow, then, to literary periodicals will pertain to those periodicals dealing with social comment and the arts. But the rate of increase seen in the number of papers published in the eighteenth century is overwhelming by comparison:

Close to nine hundred papers were in the press during the first six decades of the eighteenth century, and the number grew with the century. . . . During 1701 . . . a good two dozen journals were in operation, and the number more than doubled by the end of Anne's reign; by the accession of the third George one hundred papers were issued in a year; and the periodic productions of the final year of the century were ten times the number of those in the first year. In sum, during the one hundred eighty years preceding the nineteenth century, periodicals and newspapers in the British Isles steadily increased to a total of approximately twenty-five hundred different publications.⁵

Such a seemingly phenomenal growth was encouraged by a number of social conditions.

Of foremost importance in the rise of the periodic press was the growth of London itself which led to its becoming the natural hub of publication. The population of about 500,000 in 1700 increased by the end of the century to about 900,000. The other population centers were small by comparison, with Bristol and Norwich having about 30,000 citizens in 1700, and Manchester and Liverpool, about 80,000 in 1800.⁶ The proportionate rise in the numbers of the middle-class, a group now wielding a far greater influence than ever before, aided considerably the climate for cultural endeavour. With expanding educational facilities and opportunities in the charity, grammar, public and private schools, the middle class became an unlimited, receptive reading public, for in comparison the lower classes were uneducated and the upper classes, too small in number to support a press. The success of England's commercial trade and her relatively stable economy made the middle class financially capable of rendering the needed support. And in an age of great intellectual enlightenment and scientific advancement, one in which the ideas of Bacon, Descartes, Hobbes, and the discoveries of Newton and the Royal Society were inculcating a new awareness and concern, the middle class sought a greater range and depth of knowledge.

The pleasures and problems of such a massing of people were never of more interest than they were to the Augustan Londoners themselves. Manners and morals, religion and politics were all of utmost importance in these years of widespread change. The life of Londoners became marked by its social-consciousness, and with the increased time

for diversion two social institutions -- the coffee-house and the club -- sprang up in abundance to accommodate the new social needs. Although coffee-houses originated in the middle of the seventeenth century they never attracted great public patronage until the eighteenth century when there were about five-hundred coffee-houses in existence.⁷ In these people met in groups, which often parted along social and professional lines, to discuss the concerns of the day. As the groups in the various coffee-houses became more firmly entrenched and established, they became somewhat more formally structured, often with rules limiting membership. These groups grew into clubs and endless types of clubs came into existence. R.J. Allen, in The Clubs of Augustan London, relates the literary prominence of the club at this time to its social importance:

It was the fact that gentlemen of fashion in London and the reading-public of the whole Kingdom were extremely interested in the new social institution that made it prominent in contemporary literature. The great clubs had not yet become so exclusive that the public knew nothing about them. The small ones were not so commonplace that the public cared nothing about them. For years they were the scene of the making of epigrams, political schemes, critical decrees, and religious heresies. To their own gregarious age, they were an important step in the social evolution --- a step toward that highly valued Augustan quality, urbanity.⁸

As clubs and coffee-houses became centres for discussions of the arts and letters, and, significantly, for the perusal of and debate over the issues raised in the periodicals, they became increasingly frequented by the writers themselves. But developments and editorial needs other than the popularity which Allen notes were concomitant to their appearance in the periodical, an appearance which directly

relates to the appearance of the family in the periodical literature.

Early in the century periodicals began to distinguish themselves along the lines of interest of the readers they aimed to attract. Those with which we are to be concerned, literary periodicals, adopted the essay as a means of presentation. Essays had, of course, been written and recorded for futurity since Plato's Dialogues, and Bacon, Dryden, Cowley and others had produced many in the seventeenth century. But even if the condition of the press had been more favorable than it was for their successful serial publication, "a licensed press provided little proper circumstance for the writing, printing, and receiving of an essay sheet cast 'in the cool element of prose.'"⁹ And although serial publication had been attempted late in the seventeenth century as in, for example, the Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Rome: or The History of Popery, 1678-83, a series of serious essays,¹⁰ it was not until the early eighteenth century that the essay became subjected to the limitations of the periodic press. The difficulty of unifying essays on disparate subjects over an extended and usually indefinite length of time was great. There was, too, the problem of anonymity, for as more and more controversial areas of London life were entered, the editors often wished to protect their reputations from possible adverse public opinion. And at the same time that the participation of important men of letters enhanced the image of the press, the competition was keen, and venturesome editors wished to maintain their dignity in the face of risky odds.

The adoption of a fictitious mask or persona arose as an answer to these problems.

In the Spectator which first appeared in March 1711 Addison and Steele created the most successful persona of the age, Mr. Spectator. By taking advantage of an already popular social institution, the club, they were able to build their periodical on a contrived framework which gave them the desired anonymity and the freedom to create a dramatic and authoritative atmosphere with great potential for structural unity. Addison and Steele were not innovative since precedence for the use of the club as a device had been set in the seventeenth century, but they were most successful in combining with ingenuity the resources at hand to meet the needs of the present.

Let us look at the early appearances of the fictitious club. One of the first clubs to be found in periodical literature was the fictitious Athenian Society which sponsored a question-and-answer journal, published first on March 17, 1691 as the Athenian Gazette, and then as the Athenian Mercury. John Dunton, a bookseller, was mainly responsible for the publication, and he was assisted by a brother-in-law, Samuel Wesley, theologian, the Reverend Dr. John Norris, and Richard Sault. George Marr informs us that the title was taken from a statement of St. Paul concerning the delight of the Athenians to hear or tell some new thing and to tell something new was the purpose of the journal.¹¹ Unlike the newspaper, its topics ranged from topical issues to general questions on religion, natural science, love, superstition, folklore. Questions were long and short,

serious and ridiculous, erudite and facile, and the answers, too, were all of these. Questions such as the following were typical of those printed:

Q. Suppose a Man from his Childhood to his dying-day, should live upon Man's Flesh, at the Resurrection, whose Body shall this Man's be, that is compounded of so many Mens Bodies together?

Q. Of which are most born, Boys or Girls?

Q. Is it possible for an Estate to prosper, which is gotten by selling lewd and vicious Books; or can he be a good Man that does so?

Q. Is there any such Thing as an innate Idea of God?

Q. At what Time ought the Year to begin?

Q. Whether there can be any Natural Cause assigned for the Change of the Moon?¹²

The answers were usually given in a straightforward manner, but the lighter, more humorous ones foreshadow the style of such later informal essayists as Addison and Steele. The paper was popular with the public and circulated for six years. Its success was in itself evidence of the general thirst for knowledge and information. In relation to the later development of the essay periodical, it is significant that a fiction was set up to mask the views of the true editors. In 1704 The Athenian Oracle. Being an Entire Collection of the Valuable Questions and Answers in the old Athenian Mercuries was published. In 1693, while the Mercury was in circulation, Charles Gildon published The History of the Athenian Society, for the Resolving of all Nice and Curious Questions . . . to reassure the readers of the authority of the members of the Athenian Society, but he was not concerned with the personal qualities and attributes of members

which were so important to later fictitious editors.

In 1692 John Dunton had been involved in another publishing enterprise of fictitious authorship. Gildon and Dunton published The Post-boy rob'd of his Mail: or, the Pacquet Broke Open. Consisting of Five Hundred Letters, To Persons of several Qualities and Conditions. With Observations Upon each Letter. Publish'd by a Gentleman concern'd in the Frolick. The club members had supposedly stolen the letters while intoxicated, sent the most honorable on as directed, and then kept the rest for publication. The club was sustained in the book and took on an intrinsic interest, but being a book, and not a serial publication like the essay periodicals, it did not have the same functions to fulfil, nor did the authors have the same publishing problems with which to deal.¹³

Defoe further extended the use of the club as a device in the Review of 1704 when he used his 'Scandalous Club' as a means of reforming contemporary manners. The club members of the Athenian Society had aimed primarily to instruct, but the members of the Scandalous Club aimed primarily to divert the readers and to provide a change from the serious issues, such as economics and foreign trade, with which Defoe dealt. Defoe makes frequent use of the fictitious letter which was to be so important in the periodicals using the family as a device. He has the club actually appearing before the readers as a group in session, but the characters are not individually drawn, nor are they individually important to the function of the fiction in the way that individual characters were in the later periodicals.¹⁴

His use of the club was extended by Ned Ward in The Weekly Comedy of 1707 to include satiric attacks on manners from different points of view, representative of distinct social types. The paper, subtitled Humours of a Coffee-House, reported the news and discussions of eighteen men who frequented the coffee-house. The group resembles a club by its exclusiveness, and it furthers the didactic ends of the paper, but Ward was more concerned with the novelty of his idea than with making it appear convincing. It did not achieve the unity and continuity found in the later development of the fictional groupings.¹⁵

Each of these periodical ventures perpetuated or added something of its own character to the development of the club as a device. The early use of the club persona aimed only at establishing an authoritative body as in the Athenian Society. In The Weekly Comedy the use of the persona was extended to include different individuals. The periodicals which we are about to consider in more detail took full advantage of the potential which lay in the characterization of individual members, and made them functional in achieving a wide range of goals.

The Spectator, generally considered the pinnacle of success in the use of the club as a framework, sustained far more than any of its predecessors a delicate balance between intrinsic club interest and essay content. In it the variety of uses that club members could serve was extended and dramatized, and the areas of concern and influence were infinitely widened. In the Spectator Club each member

was representative of a different social type. He expressed his own views and was seen in relation to his own cultural or social interests. Each member furthered the interests of the group and, hence, the purposes of the authors. For Addison and Steele, however, the club framework was a means to an end; the club itself was secondary to their main intention: "To make their Instruction agreeable and their Diversion useful."¹⁶ The 'instruction' included an unprecedented range and depth of concerns, from literary criticism in general to discussions of particular works of current interest, from discussions of contemporary manners and morals to philosophical discourses of universal interest and concern. And whatever the emphasis of the paper on a particular day, the serialized form gave it the necessary continuity of subject matter and unity of style.

The popularity and immediate success of the Spectator encouraged a large number of imitations, none of which achieved the success of the former. Hoping to avoid an over-use of the club device and in possible fear of the monumental shadow cast by the Spectator, some editors sought variations upon the theme of the club as a means of attaining the same or similar ends. The family offered such an alternative, for it could be used as a contrived framework with a potentially great scope in subject matter, and it could be introduced in many different ways. Some editors chose to make the family the sole basis for their essays; others combined it with elements of the club device, still taking advantage of that ever-popular institution.

It had been Steele himself who first introduced the fictitious family to the literary periodical, for when the first issue of the Tatler was published on April 12, 1709, he had assumed the editorial role of Isaac Bickerstaff. Although the first issue promised reports from various reputable coffee-houses, and these do dominate the first several issues, in the tenth issue Bickerstaff introduced his half-sister, Jenny Distaff, the first of a large family circle to appear throughout the long life of the periodical. It was to this early work that he looked for a fictional device when he was ready to publish the Guardian, and not to the Spectator; yet his collaboration with Addison in the publication of the Spectator in the years between the Tatler and the Guardian was not without beneficial results.

The Guardian appeared for the first time on March 12, 1713, only a few months after the temporary cessation of the Spectator. Steele introduced the fictitious editor, Nestor Ironside, at the outset. He realized the possibilities for his use of the Lizard family as a structural framework and he soon developed the family and the ends which it could serve. As a result, other papers appeared which offered notable variations on his plan; one of which was the Lay Monk, edited by Sir Richard Blackmore and John Hughes. The Lay Monk, which ran for only forty issues, from November 16, 1713 to February 15, 1714, combined elements of the club and the family devices. The Grumbler first appeared on February 24, 1715, and was edited by Thomas Burnet who introduced himself as Squire Gizzard, obviously inviting comparison with Ironside's already famous Lizard

family. The use of the family as a device was found as late in the eighteenth century as 1756 when the Prater was published. The Prater, a light, witty paper using the family device almost as an end in itself, ran only thirty-five numbers and was edited by J. Holcombe, in the paper known as Nicholas Babbie. The Prater marked the close of another chapter in the history of the development of the eighteenth-century periodical, yet as we shall see, it was not without important and significant repercussions.

The family was potentially a more valuable device than the club, but since there was no exponent of it which could seriously rival the exponents of the club device in popularity and longevity, the family device has long been denied its deserved share of critical attention. We have suggested how the family arose as a device and how it related to the periodical endeavors of the time. We shall now go on to consider the development of the device. We shall see the different characters in their family settings. Certain traits are shared by the fictitious characters and groupings, and the patterns and similarities which emerge in all of the papers to be considered justify a classification of a group of essay periodicals according to their fictitious framework. After the ensuing description of the device, it will be seen that the nature of its use in the various papers had more similarities than differences. The family was designed to be functional, and the true editors all worked towards the achievement of that end.

CHAPTER II

A DESCRIPTION OF THE FAMILY DEVICE

The creation of fictitious characters neither began nor ended with the periodical essay. But the contributions of Addison, Steele, Sir Richard Blackmore, John Hughes, J. Holcombe, and Thomas Burnet, the editors whom we are to consider, enhanced the development of characterization in literature by adapting traditional modes of expression to needs and conditions peculiar to their age. The need to create a persona intended to express the views of the editor could have been the catalyst for the creation of other characters, whose purpose was quite different. Some of the fictitious characters we meet, such as the Lizards, are simply drawn with only a few aspects of their characters revealed; others, such as Bickerstaff and Ironside, are more complex, and at times act as personae. In any case, the use of fictitious characters in eighteenth-century literature provided writers with an anonymity that offered many literary advantages, an anonymity which was not only desirable, but often necessary in beginning a new work. The use of a persona had the further literary advantage of allowing a distinctive character to evolve with an air of authority when such was desired, a personality with whom others could identify, and most notably for our purpose, a family for the introduction and discussion of a wide range of

material. Furthermore, if charged with holding an opinion the author could reply that it was not his, but his fictitious editor's. Thus until an editor knew what kind of reception his work was receiving, he did well to conceal his identity, protecting himself both professionally and personally. With these advantages in mind the early fictitious figures were created.

Although the Spectator followed the already established trend of using the club as a literary device, and did not use the family, its relevance to our topic cannot be overlooked. Generally accepted as the pinnacle of achievement in eighteenth-century periodical writings with regard to both style and content, its use of a sustained fictitious framework must be the standard against which the success or failure of other works is measured. The challenges of discipline and control offered by a fictitious club were met so successfully that the credibility of the group's existence was not so much a point of issue as what the members did or said. The first number of the Spectator was published on Thursday, March 1, 1710-11, only two short months after the close of the Tatler. While Steele gratefully and sincerely acknowledged Addison's frequent and invaluable contributions to the Tatler,¹ the periodical had been his responsibility; in the Spectator the responsibility for publication was shared almost equally between the two men, with Addison writing two hundred seventy-four and Steele, about two hundred thirty-six of the five hundred fifty-five numbers of the Spectator's first run.² Imperfections which had existed in earlier periodicals were overcome as a result of the close

collaboration -- the sobriety of Addison and the spontaneity of Steele were complementary forces. Their highly polished and effective dramatis personae is worthy of our consideration at this point.

Evidence of a tightly controlled use of the fictitious character is found in the first number of the Spectator which Addison introduced under the assumed mask of Mr. Spectator.³ Realizing the natural curiosity of readers to know about the writer of a work, Mr. Spectator gives an account of his life in a relaxed, informal style of narration. He tells of his peculiarly natural, almost seemingly congenital, bent toward taciturnity which leads one to regard his behaviour and character as thoroughly consistent and predictable. He was "born to a small hereditary estate" and was noted in infancy for his grave behaviour, when he threw away his rattle before he was two months old because he already eschewed frivolity of any kind. He was known as a "very sullen youth" and distinguished himself at the university by a "most profound silence." A scholar, he travelled widely to satisfy his thirst for knowledge and, maintaining his habitual and confirmed silence, he saw and studied all that incited his interest or piqued his curiosity. He frequents St. James's Coffee-house, the Grecian, the theatre, and literary circles. Mr. Spectator assumes a totally passive role, as indicated by his name, and although he frequents most public places, no more than half a dozen friends of the Spectator Club know him. The fact that he is passive and observing rather than active and involved is what commends him as a suitable narrator for his paper:

Thus I live in the world rather as a Spectator of mankind, than as one of the species, by which means I have made myself a speculative statesman, soldier, merchant, and artisan, without ever meddling with any practical part in life. I am very well versed in the theory of a husband, or a father, and can discern the errors in the economy, business, and diversion of others, better than those who are engaged in them; as standers-by discover blots which are apt to escape those who are in the game.

(Spectator, No. 10)

To appease his friends who fear that all that he has seen and learned may end in silence, he agrees to a writing venture, but to avoid unwanted recognition withholds "my name, my age, and my lodgings."

Mr. Spectator indicates that his paper will contribute to "the advancement of the public-weal," but he does not say how this advancement will be accomplished. He promises only a daily paper and an account in the second number of his few friends. The concern of this first issue is in establishing the character of the narrator firmly in the mind of the reader. This would seem to indicate the preeminence of the character over the matter, when, as we shall see, it is a persuasive device which attracts the reader for an external reason into the core and central concerns of the paper. Although the narrator has given a short account of himself, he has incited curiosity by the very enigmatic behaviour which he has described in himself. His insistence on his very singular silence leads us to expect a consistent character and one whose passivity renders him impartial and detached in all matters of concern.

How, it may be queried, can a consistently passive man make enlivened daily reports to his readers? The answer becomes obvious as, in the second number of the periodical, he introduces the lively

and diverse members of his society. The first and most famous member of the Spectator Club is the country gentleman, Sir Roger de Coverley, "whose great grand-father was inventor of that famous country-dance which is called after him." He has endeared himself to all who know him by virtue of his singular good nature and harmless eccentricities: "He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty: keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behaviour, that he is rather beloved than esteemed." The next in authority is another bachelor who resides in the Inner Temple to satisfy his father, but whose interests follow the arts and letters, classics and philosophy, and whose good friends know him to have a great deal of wit. A third member is Sir Andrew Freeport, an eminent merchant, "a person of indefatigable industry, strong reason, and great experience" who, while not given to scholarship, has a "natural, unaffected eloquence" which makes his speech as pleasant as wit would make it in another. And then there is Captain Sentry, a relative of Sir Roger. He is a man of courage, understanding, and "invincible modesty" who "was some years a captain, and behaved himself with great gallantry in several engagements and at several sieges;" next, a clergyman, a very philosophical man of good breeding and great integrity who "visits but seldom;" and finally, Will Honeycomb, introduced so that "our society may not appear a set of humourists, unacquainted with the gallantries and pleasures of the age. . . ." Will is a middle-aged beau in whom "time has made but very little impression, either by wrinkles on his forehead, or traces on

his brain."

Such an interesting group of figures, so well described by the narrator, opens infinite possibilities for topics of discussion. Representing various classes and interests found among his prospective audience, they form a group which by its diversity promises to be entertaining and instructive; in it are men of both wit and learning. Although Mr. Spectator has not yet formally stated his purpose, he has in describing his friends, given a greater insight into his own attitudes in the choice of virtues he commends, and in the types of people with whom he chooses to express himself. It is evident that he admires learning, wit, good humour, good manners and moderate behavior. His intentions are implicitly stated; he intends to inform and entertain; and he and his friends have attracted enough popularity to ensure a ready and enthusiastic audience.

As characters appear and reappear vague plot lines develop, and the characters take on an intrinsic interest which furthers the continuity demanded of a serialized work. The character we meet most frequently in the papers is Sir Roger de Coverley. In No. 2 his character is briefly described; his endearing qualities are mentioned and important aspects of his life, such as his unfortunate love affair with a "perverse beautiful widow," are indicated. In the ensuing numbers the points outlined in the introduction are supported by example or by explanations by Sir Roger himself, until he does, in fact, endear himself to us. When he is in his country home we see the way in which he manages his family (No. 107), chooses a chaplain

(No. 106), and interacts with friends and neighbours; his interest in fox-hunting is followed (Nos. 115, 116, 131), and his participation in court proceedings is recorded in an account of his reception at the assizes where, although the court was seated, the justices "made room for the old knight at the head of them" at which point he whispered in the Judge's ear that "'he was glad his lordship had met with so good weather in his circuit'" (No. 122). When he is in the city we find him in friendly dispute with Sir Andrew Freeport (No. 174), in conversation with the Spectator in Gray's Inn Walks (No. 269); we find him visiting tombs in Westminster Abbey (No. 329), and attending the theatre with the Spectator and his relation, Captain Sentry (No. 335). And he tells his own tale of his unrequited love for the widow and of the turn of events in her life. His values and principles are gradually revealed until cumulatively they support a consistent and familiar figure. Finally in No. 517 when Mr. Spectator announces the death of Sir Roger as "a piece of ill news . . . which very sensibly afflicted every one of us," he is justified in saying, "I question not but my readers themselves will be troubled at the hearing of it."⁴

It is the consistency of portraiture and the vague plot outline which make the Spectator's use of fictitious characters so unique. Mr. Spectator's character is consciously planned and revealed. On December 6, 1712 Steele brought the final issue, No. 555 in the first run for Volume 7 of the Spectator to a close by revealing his

identity and frankly admitting the advantages of an assumed mask:

It is much more difficult to converse with the world in a real than a personated character. That might pass for humour in the Spectator, which would look like arrogance in a writer who sets his name to his work. The fictitious person might condemn those who disapproved him, and extol his own performances without giving offence. He might assume a mock authority, without being looked upon as vain and conceited. The praises or censures of himself fall only upon the creature of his imagination. . . .

Fictitious portraiture became a highly polished device in the Spectator and the success it achieved looks backward in time to the Tatler, which was an experiment in the use of a fictitious framework, at the same time that it looks forward to Steele's Guardian, which was the chief exponent of the family device.

Steele had introduced the Tatler to the London public on Tuesday, April 12, 1709, under a motto which he was to use for the first eighty numbers:

Quicquid agunt homines---
 nostri est farrago libelli.
 Juv. Sat. i. 85, 86.

Whate'er men do, or say, or think, or dream,
 Our motley paper seizes for its theme.⁵

And motley the first paper certainly was. In it are a few vague hints concerning the character of the narrator, Isaac Bickerstaff, many promises regarding future issues, and the introduction of a number of 'motley' subjects. The narrator begins by indicating a sincere concern for the public good in attempting the project at hand:

Though the other papers, which are published for the use of the good people of England, have certainly very wholesome effects, and are laudable in their particular kinds, they do not seem to come up to the main design of such narrations, which, I humbly presume, should be principally intended for the use of politic persons, who are so public-spirited as to neglect their own affairs to look into transactions of state. Now these gentlemen, for the most part being persons of strong zeal, and weak intellects, it is both a charitable and necessary work to offer something, whereby such worthy and well-affected members of the commonwealth may be instructed, after their reading, what to think: which shall be the end purpose of this my paper, wherein I shall, from time to time, report and consider all matters of what kind soever that shall occur to me, and publish such my advices and reflections every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, in the week, for the convenience of the post.

The tone is at once familiar and relaxed, but the humility which Bickerstaff tries to reflect is ironic in view of his immediate, although admittedly subtle, charge against the efforts of his rival editors. When he takes it upon himself to be responsible for so ambitious a task as instructing people on what to think, the reader questions his justification for claiming a position which commands and demands a high degree of respect, virtue, and authority. Steele has chosen his name because of the fact that Bickerstaff was a well-known figure with a past which was already familiar to the readers before he appeared to introduce the new periodical. Isaac Bickerstaff had been Swift's persona when in 1708 he had predicted the death of John Partridge, a quack astrologer. Partridge had been at the mercy of Swift's sharp pen, which had aimed at attacking and ridiculing the credulity of the times, a credulity made evident by the success of a great number of astrologers. Swift had taken the name from a

locksmith's door and after his using it for the literary attack, many friends followed suit, and the joke was carried on under that same name. But Bickerstaff was then only a well-known astrologer, not a developed character, and his original literary début could not have significantly added to the dignity which the new editor tried to assume.

Bickerstaff's desire to please is evident when he promises to entertain the women "in honour of whom I have invented the title of this paper." He offers his first paper "gratis," although he adds, "I am at a very great charge for proper materials for this work." He promises correspondence from "all parts of the known and knowing world" and then sets out the format of his planned material:

All accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment, shall be under the article of White's Chocolate-house; poetry, under that of Will's Coffee-House; Learning, under the title of Grecian; foreign and domestic news, you will have from Saint James's Coffee-house, and what else I have to offer on any other subject shall be dated from my own apartment.

Also, to assure his readers that his supply of entertainment will never be exhausted, he asserts that he can by "the power of divination . . . tell you all that will happen before it comes to pass." He thus intends to retain the astrological powers of the original Bickerstaff.

The first number continues according to the plan outlined at the outset with a story of a young man in love for the benefit of all those "who actually are, or who ever shall be, in love" under the address of White's Chocolate House, with comments on the comedy

Love for Love and reflections on the state of the theatre from Will's Coffee House, with a political news report from St. James's Coffee House, and finally, a statement affirming the death of Partridge. He calls for an immediate response from his readers as he bids them "mend their manners" or they, too, will be listed among the deceased. From hindsight we can see that such an introduction inaccurately forecasts what the paper is eventually to become. Although he will soon begin to introduce his relatives, the use of the family as a device is not indicated. In the early stage of his work it is the departmentalization of contents that assumes major importance and it is mainly through the different clubs and coffee-houses from which he writes that he introduces a diversity of subjects.

After the first number we learn more about Bickerstaff's interests and moral attitudes, but his thoughts are still conveyed with a somewhat superficial attempt to gain a convincing personality. He does not give a lengthy account of himself as the Spectator does, and we must wait for an accumulation of basic knowledge about him. At first he is given just enough personality to attract attention, and to disguise the true authorship of the papers. In No. 2 he keeps his promise to entertain the ladies and presents a poem, "The Medicine, A Tale -- for the Ladies."⁶ Finally, before ending his third paper, he makes a passing reference to a kinsman, John Bickerstaff, who is acting in a play which he wishes his readers to see; he writes:

It is a very natural passion in all good members of the commonwealth, to take what care they can of their families; therefore I hope the reader will forgive me, that I desire he would go to the play called the Stratagem this evening, which is to be acted for the benefit of my near kinsman, Mr. John Bickerstaff. I protest to you, the gentleman has not spoken to me to desire this favour. . . .

The mention of John is in itself a minor concern of the paper, added almost as an afterthought, but it is the first mention he makes of a relation.

Reality is lent to his characterization as he mentions in No. 4 the various suggestions his friends made as he planned his publishing venture, and his reactions put him in a favorable light as he becomes an active participant in social intercourse. This introduction of friends continues in No. 6, on a visit to Sappho, "a fine lady, who . . . can say or do what ever she pleases, without the imputation of anything that can injure her character," when he records the welcome he receives from her as a means of introducing a somewhat rambling and discursive section on poetry:

'Oh! Mr. Bickerstaff, I am utterly undone; I have broken that pretty Italian fan I shewed you when you were here last, wherein were so admirably drawn our first parents in Paradise. . . . But there is such an affinity between painting and poetry, that I have been improving the images which were raised by that picture, by reading the same representation in two of our greatest poets.

It is the first time that he uses the potential existing in the introduction of friends, that of enabling direct dialogue, to add variety in introducing his papers. In later issues he will use the family in the same way.

Finally in No. 10 another relation, and one who is to play an important role in the periodical, introduces herself as Isaac's

sister, Jenny Distaff, who is, in fact, his half-sister. She is the most frequent member of the Bickerstaff family to appear -- directly as editor of several issues, or indirectly through Isaac's considerations. He assumes, by virtue of a wide age-gap between him and his half-sister, and his confirmed bachelorhood, a fatherly role with her, and admits that she regards him more as a father than a brother.

Jenny's main concerns are love and marriage; in No. 33 she writes on the treatment of women and in No. 40 Bickerstaff gives an account of a discussion which arose between Jenny and her friends on the passion of love. As Bickerstaff wishes to see his sister well married and succeeds in finding her a mate in 'the honest Tranquillus' (No. 75), a vague plot line develops. He records her wedding in detail (No. 79), complete with his pre-marital advice. Bickerstaff is the confidant of the newly married couple, and through him we learn of their first real quarrel and reconciliation (No. 85) and their subsequent happiness. When in No. 104 Jenny and Bickerstaff are found philosophising on the ways of securing happiness in marriage, Jenny admits her one fear in regard to her own present state of happiness as she tells her brother: "I am afraid, you must know, that I shall not always make the same amiable appearance in his eye that I do at present."

Bickerstaff assures her that "An inviolable fidelity, good humour, and complacency of temper, outlive all the charms of a fine face, and make the decays of it invisible." Although their mutual affection and respect is obvious, Bickerstaff tells us: "We discoursed very long upon this head, which was equally agreeable to us both; for I

must confess, as I tenderly love her, I take as much pleasure in giving her instructions for her welfare, as she herself does in receiving them."

No. 11 marks a new turn in the early use of the family as a device for in it Bickerstaff devotes his considerations mainly to letters received from relations. By attributing a few short verses to a kinsman instead of to their actual source (Mr. Jabez Hughes), he is able to criticize and reflect upon them without incurring censure. We see, too, in the same number his use of the family to justify the pride which was suspected in him before, and which he attempted, rather unsuccessfully, to hide by a thin veil of humility:

Of all the vanities under the sun, I confess that of being proud of one's birth is the greatest. At the same time, since in this unreasonable age, by the force of prevailing custom, things in which men have no hand are imputed to them; and that I am used by some people, as if Isaac Bickerstaff were nobody: to set the world right in that particular, I shall give you my genealogy, as a kinsman of ours has sent it me from the Herald's Office.

A letter from D. Distaff follows in which she first compliments Isaac on his "ingenious writings" and "learned predictions," a reference to his well-known role of astrologer, and then launches into a genealogy of the Staffs.⁷ The family originated in Staffordshire, a place, she tells us, which took its name from the Staffs. She reports that the first record of a Staff was "'one Jacobstaff, a famous and renowned astronomer, who by Dorothy his wife, had issue seven sons, viz. Bickerstaff, Longstaff, Wagstaff, Quarterstaff, Whitestaff, Falstaff, and Tipstaff.'" It is little wonder that Bickerstaff had such pride in himself, for in a family of notorious and disreputable characters

which included the descendants of Longstaff, "'a rakish disorderly sort of people,'" the Quarterstaffs, "'most of them prize-fighters or deer-stealers,'" and the Falstaffs who "'are strangely given to whoring and drinking,'" his own branch "'is chief of the Staffs, and called Bickerstaff, quasi Biggerstaff; as much as to say, the Great Staff, or Staff of Staffs; and . . . it has applied itself to astronomy with great success, after the example of our aforesaid forefather.'"

A sequel to No. 11 appears in No. 75, the same paper in which Bickerstaff recommends his sister for marriage. In it he gives an amusing account of the Bickerstaffian shapes. The history of the family's planning the physical appearance of future generations began with one Sir Isaac Bickerstaff:

We have, in the genealogy of our house, the descriptions and pictures of our ancestors from the time of King Arthur; in whose days there was one of my own name, a knight of his round table, and known by the name of Sir Isaac Bickerstaff. He was low of stature, and of a very swarthy complexion. . . . But he was more prudent than men of that height usually are, and would often communicate to his friends his design of lengthening and whitening his posterity.

With each succeeding generation matches were made to eliminate such physical defects, although the process of purification was complicated by the appearance of a 'very high nose' in one child. Isaac tells us:

While our ancestors were thus taken up in cultivating the eyes and nose, the face of the Bickerstaffs fell down insensibly into a chin; which was not taken notice of, their thoughts being so much more employed upon the more noble features, until it became almost too long to be remedied.

But length of time, and successive care in our alliances, have cured this also, and reduced our faces into that tolerable oval, which we enjoy at present.

By this time the readers are well acquainted with the Staff

family's history. And it is now increasingly easy and natural for Bickerstaff to introduce more relations to the public.

Some issues deal at length with the affairs or conduct of a relative; others deal with a relative only in passing to emphasize or support the central concern of the paper. No. 143 is of interest as it shows Jenny succumbing to the fashionable world. She appears at her uncle's in an equipage and although he treats the matter lightly with her, he soon warns Tranquillus in a letter of the danger of indulging in Jenny's vanity and he stresses again the merits of moderation. In No. 151 Bickerstaff discusses the folly of over-dress in women and then to illustrate cites a humorous anecdote. His spinster great aunt, Mrs. Margery Bickerstaff, was in possession of a thousand pounds which the family hoped to keep. Whenever she seemed in danger of marriage, the family, catering to her excessive vanity, presented her with a new gown or petticoat at which time she would consider herself superior to her suitor and save herself from matrimony. In No. 168 there is an amusing reference to a rude young man who asked Bickerstaff "'whether my sister Jenny was breeding or not?'" The question leads Bickerstaff to a consideration of the nature and effects of such impudence.

In No. 169 we read a letter from Francis Bickerstaff, a country gentleman and a cousin of Isaac's, who expounds on the virtues of country life, and expresses his joy in the harmony and bounty of nature. In No. 184 Bickerstaff makes known what kind of behaviour and dress is expected from Jenny and Tranquillus when he takes them to the

theatre. In No. 189 he discusses family relations and shows that Cousin Sam Bickerstaff and his children do not enjoy a happy relationship because the father nags his children so much that he loses the affection he so greatly desires. A few issues later (No. 207) Bickerstaff's concern is with recounting differences in manners observed at a dinner engagement with his three young nephews. Isaac, assuming a fatherly role, hoped to correct their inadequacies by giving advice on gentlemanly conduct. As the references to relatives increase, Bickerstaff's relationship to them becomes clearer. He takes pride in his ability to be an objective observer. He does not always regard his relatives as the epitome of virtue and thus his role as advisor is emphasized.

By the end of the Tatler we see that Bickerstaff and his family have been introduced in a somewhat piecemeal fashion, as though Steele's recognition of the potential of the fictitious family became increasingly apparent with the continued progress and success of the paper rather than at the outset. As the Tatler continues he departs more and more from the original plan and adopts new devices as needs arise. Departmentalization breaks down; reports from coffee-houses give way to whole issues addressed from Bickerstaff's apartment, or from his country home in Sheer Lane.

While the club and the coffee-house cease to be a fictitious framework for the periodical, Bickerstaff never completely ignores their potential in attracting the reader's attention. The family is the only sustained social group in the Tatler, but Bickerstaff

introduces at different times three other groups of people. There is the small group of wits which meets at Will's Coffee-house to discuss writing, conversation and wit. The group includes "Will Dactyle, the epigrammatist, John Comma the grammarian, Nick Cross-grain who writes anagrams," Martius, "the only man in England whom nobody can understand, though he talks more than any man else," and Bickerstaff (No. 158). Though the group is not mentioned often the characters are distinctive enough to become familiar figures whenever they write letters, or make comments which appear in the periodical.

Another group of which Bickerstaff is a member is the Society of Upholders, a group dedicated to the interment of the dead. This group is obviously committed to continuing the 'Partridge joke' and was probably created for the 'in-group' entertainment of the wits and men of letters among Bickerstaff's reading public. In No. 99 the company advertises a "commission of interment" which has been "awarded against John Partridge, philomath, professor of physic and astrology; and whereas the said Partridge hath not surrendered himself, nor shown cause to the contrary" the group invites any friend to be a pallbearer. In No. 110 Bickerstaff describes the trials held by the group to decide whether to condemn to death or acquit authors of "still born work," "fathers of a mixed progeny," "a great crowd of superannuated benchers of the inns of court, senior fellows of colleges, and defunct statesmen." From time to time Bickerstaff publishes announcements of the deceased or records the progress of the group. Whatever the direct satiric intent of this group implied, it was intrinsically

interesting enough to capture the imagination of the general public, and to provide a standing joke within the paper while increasing the familiarity with Bickerstaff and his affairs.

And then finally, there is the small group of "heavy honest men" who meet at the Trumpet in Shire-lane. The club has dwindled in number from fifteen aging members to five. The conversation of the group is enjoyed by Bickerstaff as a kind of "preparative for sleep" (No. 132). Their discussions of modern frivolities, and their considerations of growing old gracefully, hopefully aimed at making themselves useful and entertaining to mankind, show Bickerstaff at ease with his contemporaries.

Despite Steele's original intentions to address Bickerstaff's lucubrations from the various coffee-houses, and despite the inclusion of fictitious clubs within the paper, the clubs and coffee-houses feature far less prominently than either Bickerstaff himself or his relations. It was not until the subsequent publication of the Spectator that the device of the clubs and the coffee-houses was fully developed. But even the fiction which Bickerstaff creates in his guardian angel, Pacelot, is barely sustained in the Tatler. He introduces Pacelot in No. 13, presents an account of his previous 'charges' in No. 15, and then refers to him only at infrequent intervals. The Tatler then was primarily an experiment in the use of the fictitious family as a literary device. Other fictions are subordinate to it, but only, it appears, through Steele's trying each and evaluating its potential. The Tatler suffers most acutely from

what seems to be a lack of planning -- a problem which was met much more squarely in the Spectator. In the Tatler the use of the family device is embryonic compared to its use in the Guardian, for it is in the latter paper that the effects of Steele's experimentation in the Tatler, and his ensuing experience and close collaboration with Addison on the Spectator, are seen. Consideration of the Guardian will show that the Tatler set an invaluable precedent for future work of its nature.

When Steele introduced the Guardian on March 12, 1713, only a few months after his final issue of the Spectator (Volume 7) on December 6, 1712, he created a new family fiction in Nestor Ironside and the Lizards, the family to whom Ironside attached himself. His return to the use of the family as a device enabled him to forego imitation of the Spectator's use of the club, and yet the high standard of characterization which he and Addison had achieved in their joint effort was carried by him into his new work. The Guardian shows much greater self-consciousness and planning when compared with the Tatler; if it did not attain the overall success of the earlier paper, it did mark a considerable stage in the development of the family as a device.

The editor, Nestor Ironside, begins the first number by espousing much the same virtues as his predecessors, Bickerstaff and Mr. Spectator, the foremost being a "benevolent spirit" which commits him to a project dedicated to the public good:

I should not have assumed the title of Guardian, had I not considered, that the qualities necessary for doing the duties of that character, proceed from the integrity of the mind, more than the excellence of the understanding. . . . To be faithful, to be honest, to be just, is what you will demand in the choice of your Guardian; or if you find added to this, that he is pleasant, ingenious, and agreeable, there will overflow satisfactions which make for the ornament, if not so immediately to the use of your life. . . . Ambition, lust, envy, and revenge, are excrescences of the mind, which I have cut off long ago.⁸

Whereas Bickerstaff had spent most of his first issue discussing plans for the paper and launching into their implementation, Ironside begins like Mr. Spectator at a more leisurely pace, and devotes the number to stating his intentions and telling us about himself. He recognizes and acknowledges the natural questions of his readers regarding his qualifications for such a position. He begins to establish himself, as Mr. Spectator had, as an impartial observer in life, but does not commit himself to a similar passivity. He promises to be impartial, though not 'neuter,' in political controversies, and he writes, "I am, with relation to the government of the church, a Tory; with regard to the state, a Whig." The "utmost impartiality" with which he hopes to carry out his job is assisted by virtue of his age, for he is beyond benefit of people and parties and has only "to deliver myself as becomes an old man with one foot in the grave, and who thinks he is passing to eternity." And in the next number he gives his age openly as being seventy-one.

In No. 2 he gives a detailed account of himself and of the circumstances leading to his guardianship of the Lizard family. While at Oxford he had contracted a close friendship with Mr. Ambrose Lizard which continued on in their more mature years. In the years following

his marriage Lizard found too many concerns claimed his attention for him to care adequately for the education and service of his only son, Marmaduke, and so he decided to entrust his friend, Ironside, with that responsibility. Lizard initiated the suggestion with compliments which attest to Ironside's integrity, and further establish his suitability in his role as editor of a new paper:

I have not observed in any man a greater candour and simplicity of mind than in yourself. You are a man that is not inclined to launch into the world, but prefers security and ease in a collegiate or single life, to going into the cares which ordinarily attend a public character, or that of a master of a family.

Ironside thus became Marmaduke's guardian, and later managed the affairs of Sir Ambrose's widow and family of nine children. The members of the young family and "what passes at the tea-table of my Lady Lizard" would supply him with a wealth of entertaining material for the benefit of his readers.

Lady Lizard is forty-six and a lady of "great understanding and noble spirit" (No. 2). Since she has both sons and daughters eligible for marriage, it becomes evident that Ironside intends to 'use' them as Bickerstaff 'used' Jenny, that is, as a basis for reflection and comment on the realm of behaviour and circumstance attending courtship and marriage. There are nine Lizard children, perhaps too many for us to come to know well. They differ widely in interests and temperament, thus allowing their guardian a great range of potential topics. The diversity found in the members of the Spectator Club is here incorporated into the family.

Being a guardian rather than a father to the Lizards gives Ironside an objective position in relation to his adopted family:

I do not know but my regards, in some considerations, have been more useful than those of a father; and as I wanted all that tenderness, which is the bias of inclination in men towards their own offspring, I have had a greater command of reason when I was to judge of what concerned my wards, and consequently was not prompted, by my partiality and fondness towards their persons, to transgress against their interests.

(No. 5)

It is with such objectivity that he describes the members of the family, mentioning their foibles and follies along with their virtues. The eldest daughter, Jane, is twenty-three, and in love with a "gentleman of great expectation but small fortune." Jane spends much of her time at home and is a great help to her mother; Annabella is vivacious and witty, but selfish and vain as well; Cornelia is more solitary and such an avid reader that "it gives her the air of a student, and has an ill effect upon her, as she is a fine young woman;" Betty is the social-light of the family, and somewhat of a busy-body; and Mary, the youngest, is the one for whom Ironside professes an especial weakness, since she is "the very quintessence of good nature and generosity" as well as being the "perfect picture of her grand-father" (No. 5). Ironside gives more lengthy descriptions of the young men of the family. Sir Harry Lizard is residing on his country estate, and while a gentleman of good understanding, "his virtues are much greater than his accomplishments" (No. 6). He has a sound business sense and is a keen horseman. Thomas is preparing himself for the courts, and is an extremely amiable and

prudent young man who dabbles, though he does not excel, in a number of varied activities; William is a graver, more inquisitive man than Thomas, and less flexible in accommodating himself to others; and finally, the youngest son, John, twenty, is at Oxford, preparing to take holy orders, and acts always in the interests of piety and virtue (No. 13). Lady Lizard, the mother of the household, is regarded with deep respect and affection by both her children and their guardian.

Having introduced his wards, Ironside begins immediately to take advantage of their diverse interests and conditions in life by drawing them into his discourses. No. 7 provides a good illustration of Steele's way of leading the reader into a subject through the use of the familiar members of the family. He is at Lady Lizard's tea-table as he promised he would frequently be. With only the family present the conversation "tended to the establishment of these young ladies in the world." Jane, the most eligible daughter for marriage, was about to become the specific concern of the group:

My lady, I observed, had a mind to make mention of the proposal to Mrs. Jane, of which she is very fond, and I as much avoided, as being equally against it; but it is by no means proper the young ladies should observe we ever dissent; therefore I turned the discourse, by saying, 'it was time enough to think of marrying a young lady, who was but three-and-twenty, ten years hence.'

And Ironside succeeds in turning the conversation to a more general discussion of marriage. In No. 10 a general discussion on the proper emphasis to be placed on dress is given greater immediacy and relevance by his references to the youngest member of the family,

Miss Molly, who sews. In No. 37 Ironside is found entertaining his "female wards" at the theatre with a production of Othello. To insure his readers' interest in the general criticism of the play, which is the main point of the paper, he begins by noting the observations he made of the varied interests and reactions of the girls. He could not help but notice that as three of the sisters were intent on watching the tragedy before them, "Annabella had a rambling eye, and for some time was more taken up with observing what gentlemen looked at her, and with criticizing the dress of the ladies, than with any thing that passed on the stage."⁹

The intimate nature of the relationship between Nestor Ironside and the Lizard family becomes increasingly evident as the papers continue. In one he comes upon Cornelia reading poetry, and she "with an innocent confusion in her face" invites him to read the verses; in another, he oversees correspondence between Annabella and a young suitor (Nos. 15 and 16). By No. 26 he has become a match-maker for Sir Harry, informing him of a beautiful and virtuous young woman who would be an advantageous marriage-partner. No. 31 opens with a picture of Ironside enjoying a fireside discussion with the women:

My Lady Lizard is never better pleased than when she sees her children about her engaged in any profitable discourse. I found her last night sitting in the midst of her daughters, and forming a very beautiful semi-circle about the fire. I immediately took my place in an elbow chair, which is always left empty for me in the corner.

Our conversation fell insensibly upon the subject of happiness, in which every one of the young ladies gave her opinion, with that freedom and unconcernedness which they always use when they are in company only with their mother and myself.

The family atmosphere appears relaxed and comfortable, and the Guardian is accepted, even welcomed, into it as a beloved, father-figure. He dotes on the children, worrying about Cornelia's over-indulgence in poetry -- "I should be loth to have a poetess in the family" (No. 15) -- and he lets their affairs take preeminence in his life. He has arrived at that stage where he has nothing to demand of life and can enjoy all that he receives; he frankly and jovially admits, "An healthy old fellow that is not a fool, is the happiest creature living" (No. 26).

The way in which Ironside follows his original plan of a fictitious family bears a closer resemblance to the Spectator and the Spectator's use of the fictitious club than it does to Bickerstaff and the Tatler. He plots his course and follows it. While the family of Staffs was always on the increase, and we could always expect a new one to appear at anytime, Ironside's family group has definite limits; Lady Lizard's family is as restricted in membership as the Spectator Club.

The fatherly role which Bickerstaff assumes with Jenny and the advisory role he fulfills with his relatives is extended in the Guardian. We learn about Ironside largely through direct self-revelation. He records his reactions to social contacts, observes and then reflects and speculates on whatever has attracted his attention. The family is seen through his eyes, and we see him through theirs. The Guardian progresses at a more leisurely pace than the Tatler, not bound by the early departmentalization of the latter, and not

interrupted by news flashes from St. James's Coffee-House. Steele has this time created a highly unified paper with a more consistent character, a defter and more highly polished use of the family as a device, and a more confident grasp on his audience. Yet, after Steele establishes Ironside as advisor, father, critic, and censor of the family and after Ironside proves his ability to fulfill his obligations, the family becomes less important. Ironside assumes the position of Universal Guardian and devotes his efforts more generally to the good of mankind. It is a ludicrous assumption, but the essays do take on a more serious tone with less digression in the latter half of the periodical. He increases his scope and includes more discussion of friends, clubs, and letters, using all of these as inspiration and the focal points for his essays. When Steele ended the Guardian on October 1, 1713, it marked the end of his use of the family as a device.

On October 6, 1713 John Hughes who had contributed a number of essays and letters to the Tatler, the Spectator, and the Guardian, expressed his regret in a letter to Addison that Steele had left the Guardian for the Englishman, a periodical begun that same day, and not using a fictitious framework. His letter suggested that he and Addison might undertake a new periodical for which he enclosed a prospectus and part of the proposed second number so that Addison might "see an offer in it of a new invented character, with a cast of oddness in it, to draw attention, and to lay a foundation for a great variety of matters, and of adventures."¹⁰ Addison declined the offer

and Hughes looked elsewhere for a collaborator.¹¹ On November 16, 1713 he and Sir Richard Blackmore published the first issue of the Lay Monk. Although their periodical ran a short life of forty issues (ending three months later in February), and has since lapsed into relative obscurity, it is of importance to us for its contribution to the use of the family device.

The success of the Tatler and the Spectator emphasized the need for ingenuity and innovation in periodical writing. Blackmore and Hughes chose to combine elements of each periodical and to develop their fictitious framework to a level of primary importance until it became almost, though never completely, an end in itself, assuming an unprecedented level of intrinsic interest. They chose an association of men which was mid-way between a family and a club; it was a brotherhood of lay monks. The first issue was wholly devoted to an account of the formation of the "Lay Monastery" and the consequent decision to publish the Lay Monk. It opens with a brief introduction to the relationship previously existing among the members of the fraternity:

About three years ago, several Gentlemen of liberal Education and great Examples, as well as diligent Promoters of Learning, Persons of Leisure, easy in their Fortunes, and free from the Impediments of a Family, became acquainted; and growing intimate in Friendship, as Men of the same Taste, Interest and Inclinations quickly do, often held occasional Meetings for their mutual Satisfaction and Improvement, by a free Communication of their Sentiments on Subjects of Philosophy and polite Literature.¹²

The fact that the gentlemen have become well acquainted over the three years is an important one, for the fraternity is given a solid base

and the success of the friendships in the past assures the same success in the future. It gives the impression of a unified group, exclusive as it is. That "Gentlemen of Liberal Education and great Examples" meet to discuss "Philosophy and polite Literature" is flattering to the reader who is being introduced to and considered worthy of such a group. The reader is also given an indication of what subjects he may expect to read about in following issues. Unmarried, well-educated, and having the leisure time and financial independence to pursue private interests, the brothers at least superficially resemble Bickerstaff and Ironside.

Sir Eustace Locker, "a Gentleman much esteem'd by the rest," proposes a plan by which the group may form a more formal society, whereby they might pattern themselves after societies of religious monks who withdraw from worldly life, and he points out that the first recorded instance of an upholder of the monastic life was Pythagoras who, realizing "solitude much favour'd the Design of philosophical and Contemplative Men," founded a college in Calabria. Locker traces the success of such fraternal institutions in history and concludes that his friends are well suited to the formation of a lay monastery, "that being separated from the Crowd, and deliver'd from the Noise and strife of the Busy, we may with greater Success pursue our Improvements, and enjoy the Satisfaction of Friendship in Retirement." The members agree, take up residence outside of town, and draw up rules, one of the most important being that "none shall enter into any Discourses or Debates about Affairs of State;" thus the Lay Monk would

not be a partisan periodical. Each member was to take his turn in writing essays, and Mr. Jacob Ravenscroft, in the manner of the Secretary of the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society whose province was publications, was given authority to publish them tri-weekly. In this introductory issue the formal structure of the brotherhood is presented and the intentions of the group are summarized.

Ravenscroft dedicates the second issue to introducing the members of the group, emphasizing the varied temperaments and interests ranged within it. Mr. Johnson is a critic possessed of clear judgment and strong reason; Dr. Lacon, a physician and lover of the classics, and Sir Eustace Locker, whose erudition is considerable, is interested in the fields of metaphysical science and theology. Sir Arthur Wimbledon is described as a middle-aged gentleman who "excels in a peculiar manner of instructing his Acquaintance, and correcting the Faults and Follies committed in his Company by Fables and Apologues of his own Invention." And, finally, Ned Freeman, the gallant 'man of the town,' an "odd Mixture of the Scholar and the Beau," immediately attracts the interest of female readers, and promises to add humour and wit to the project. In the third issue Ravenscroft gives an account of himself, since he often intends to address the public on his own, and he draws a witty analogy between his own diverse and unusual background and Pythagoras' theory of the transmigration of the soul, on which account he was nick-named the 'Pythagorean.' He assumes the roles of censor, interpreter, and narrator for the group. As with the other

contrived groups considered, the brotherhood promises a diversity in subject matter and attitudes owing to the wide range of 'types' within the group.

In the first issues the introduction to the group and its intentions completely overshadows the periodical's more serious intentions, but with the fourth issue the emphasis changes and the content promised initially begins to emerge. Ravenscroft almost always introduces the essays, usually acknowledging the fictitious authorship, or else, presents it by way of conversation reported or in dialogue form. His presence is felt throughout, and it is through him that our familiarity with the group as a whole increases. We see the brothers interact, and each becomes characterized by his own realm of interest; Ned Freeman, for example, is the one to whom the others direct jokes, questions, and discussions concerning women. The development of the brotherhood bears an obvious resemblance to the Spectator Club; yet, while many issues of the Spectator appear with no references made at all to the club, and the club remains secondary to the main intentions of its editors, in the Lay Monk the fictitious framework remains an integral part of the periodical relating each issue to the whole. Ravenscroft's character and his role as a kind of guardian to the group highlight the similarities between the Lay Monk and the other papers discussed. The Lay Monk differs from its predecessors largely in the degree to which it sustains its group fiction: this difference established a precedent which was further implemented in the use of the family device as found in the Grumbler

and the Prater.

Although little attention will be given to the Grumbler, a minor periodical that ran for only thirty-four numbers, it deserves mention at this time on two counts. First, it was conceived while the Lay Monk was still in circulation, and first appeared a year later on February 24, 1715. A letter written in December 1714 from Thomas Burnet to George Duckett, friends and collaborators in the work, supports the supposition that the use of the family (and the brotherhood of lay monks) was continued partly to avoid the problem of imitating the Spectator's use of the club. The letter reads:

I have writ three Grumblers, which I here send you; the first I think is a compleat piece; the second wants a little retouching, which I expect from you. The Reason I make these Characters of my Brothers, rather than a Club, is because I would avoid imitation, and the Spectator has surfeited the world with clubs.¹³

The second important feature of the Grumbler is that when Burnet introduced the family of Gizzards, which parallels the Lizard family of the Guardian in the early numbers with regard to ludicrous ancestry, he intended to create a group of grumblers which would take on an intrinsic interest. Squire Anthony Gizzard, the fictitious editor, tells us in No. 1:

I shall not concern my self with what People say of me, but grumble on like a True Gizzard. . . . Nor will it seem impertinent in me to entertain the Town with an Account of my splenatick Fits at a Time, when it is so much in Fashion over a Tea-Table for one Lady to complain of her Vapours to another.¹⁴

In No. 2 he tells us that his family of seven brothers and sisters, with the exception of an illegitimate half-brother, are such constitutional grumblers that they, too, intend to use the paper as

their means of airing complaints. Each family member is a specialist in at least one area of dissatisfaction, ranging from Brother Hugh's problems with "Taxes and Funds" to Sister Martha's "universal Hatred" for men. Although he does air their complaints, Gizzard rarely introduces the brothers or sisters in the familiar surroundings of a home, nor does he show his own relationships with them. The family never does emerge as a strong fictional unit. Robert Allen comments on the shift in emphasis in the Grumbler: "The author had little concern with serious matters, nor had he any sincere intention of reforming manners. He was young and witty, and wrote to amuse himself and the Town. The group which he chose as the dramatis personae served his ends admirably well. . . ."¹⁵ The Grumbler used the family, then, less as a device than did the earlier papers, and more as an independent fiction, but it pointed the direction which was to be followed by the next paper we shall discuss.

From March 13, 1756 to November 6, 1756, J. Holcombe published the Prater, a weekly periodical which combined elements of all the fictitious families we have considered. In so doing, he brought the development of the device to an end. The characters bear resemblances to Bickerstaff, Ironside and their respective families, and the sustained use of the family is extended from what it was in the Lay Monk. It shows a change in emphasis suggested in the Grumbler. The fictitious editor, Nicholas Babble, Esquire, like Bickerstaff, writes from "my own apartment." Like Ironside he begins immediately to answer anticipated questions about himself and the project at hand.

In the first number we find many familiar characteristics. He is an "oldish man" ('sixty odd' by his own admission in No. 4) who has "read a great many books, conversed with a great number of my fellow-creatures of both sexes, and made a great many observations on the former and the latter. . . ."¹⁶ He is a public-spirited individual as were the former editors, and he has a great deal of self-esteem; the self-justification he gives for his claim to praise is truly unique, and gives evidence of an overt sense of humour which goes farther than that of either Bickerstaff or the more serious Ironside.

Babble explains:

Authors of all capacities, whether Verse-men or Prose-men are, in my humble opinion, a public-spirited set of people, and ought not to be irreverently treated. Nay I think the Government should distinguish them in an uncommon manner: for whether they commit harmonious numbers or wretched rhymes, tuneful periods or heavy paragraphs, sense or nonsense, to the press, they contribute to the consumption of that valuable commodity Paper, and are, therefore, the laudable encouragers of one of the most flourishing manufactures in the three kingdoms: . . . I have a great deal of public-spiritedness in me, and shall therefore scrib-away, totis viribus, with all my might, for the good of my country.

(Prater, No. 1)

Like the other fictitious editors he has a great deal of family pride, and in No. 6 he sets down "all the genealogical Anecdotes I can at present remember concerning the BABBLES, in order to convince my Readers that I am a Man of Consequence, and to make them read my Lucubrations with an additional relish." He dates his ancestry to the Tower of Babel whence his family took its name, a name which has "suffered but little alteration since." Any jokes which "Wags and half-Wits" might crack on his name and descent owing to the confusion

that reigned in those biblical days will be received with a "self-sufficient shrug and a contemptuous smile." He counts the family's only foibles as a "superciliousness, with a mixture of vanity, and a propensity to be loquacious." The loquacity has given rise to many humorous scenes and amusing dialogues among the relations and he tells us that someday he will entertain the readers with them.

In his introductory issue he tells us the source from which his proposed discourses will come, and how the idea of his editing a paper originated. He has compiled a huge folio which gives him great pleasure and entertainment because, he says, "It is filled with the predictions of my own dear prolific brain." It is full of interesting and humourous anecdotes, observations and adventures, and from it he proposes to select the material for his weekly journal, with the aim of raising his name to general approbation and applause. He was encouraged to undertake such a venture by friends at Rawthmell's Coffee-house where his 'prating' attracted an appreciative audience. He intends to be "mighty agreeable" and "prodigiously entertaining," but is warned by a prudent and sincere friend to eschew too much 'tittle-tattle' and to guard against offending any of his readers. He acknowledges his predecessors, and reminds us that if he "should sometimes take a Nap, (for old folks are apt to be sleepy). . . . Isaac Bickerstaff and Nestor Ironside, my ever-honoured predecessors, (whose footsteps I shall endeavor to follow, without treading on their heels) nodded before me."

Another aspect of the new editor parallels an earlier one. He is considered a guardian to Harriot Aimwell, a young "sprightly . . . good-humoured, and worthy girl" whom he regards as being rather too frivolous and conscious of her own beauty. He has become her guardian in much the same way as Ironside became guardian to the Lizards; her father, an old boyhood friend and a widower, doted on her so much that he feared he would lose his objectivity in judging her conduct or else that he might risk losing her affection, but as the Lizard girls regarded Ironside as somewhat of a prig, she finds him at times overly conservative. He confesses, "Yet in spite of all my efforts to catch the polish'd manners of the age, I am frequently told, by the best bred people in the world, that I am too formal, particular, and full of compliment, and that ceremony is quite out of date" (No. 6).

The periodical proceeds, like the Guardian, with Babble participating in family discussions and commenting on the behaviour and adventures of his ward. The Prater is considerably less serious in its manner of presentation than the earlier paper, and Babble becomes involved in the occasional ludicrous scheme. In No. 2 he tells us how he followed Harriot and two of her frivolous friends to the theatre unnoticed to see for himself whether their conduct would be as improper as he and Harriot's father expected it would be. He describes the grand entrance made by the young ladies as he observed it from his especially chosen vantage point:

As I chuse to be seated conveniently at the Playhouse, and to look about me before the curtain is drawn up, I went thither at half an hour after five, I turn'd my eye frequently towards the box in which I saw Lady Charlotte's livery, and when it was six by my watch, expected with impatience to see the dear creatures make their public entry. But I expected in vain. Another half hour slipt away, but not Harriot: at last, just at seven o'clock, when _____ was in the midst of a very interesting scene, in bounced Lady Charlotte, Miss Giddy, and Miss Aimwell. The two first Ladies fidgetted up and down near a quarter of an hour, before they could place themselves to advantage, that is make themselves conspicuous; but I had the satisfaction to observe that Harriot enter'd the box with a becoming dignity, and seated herself in a short time, without assuming any coquetish airs.

He found it ironic that the girls were discussing manners and he proceeds to relate the conversation he "accidentally" overheard. This informality of presentation which moves away from the familiar essay to a form almost approaching the anecdote marks the greatest change in the use of the family device as found in the Prater. It will be shown that the sustained family interest functioned in the Prater with a different end in view from that shared by the other proponents of the device.

Certain patterns emerge in the development of the various fictitious editors and their family circles. The fictitious editors all establish their own identities, and then go on to introduce their families and friends. In each paper the author claims objectivity and impartiality in his job, and promises to work for the public good. None of the editors is married, but all are interested in family and female concerns; they are all aging men, but all are interested in youth. It becomes evident each paper is introducing a set of characters that will have qualities or associations each of which will

appeal to a different segment of the reading public. As in actual family life, the parent is the judge, censor, critic, of most family matters, so is he the unifying element in the home, providing security and protection for his offspring. Each of the 'guardians' whom we have considered takes on, in varying degrees, the responsibility of providing a secure, and protective base for his charges. It is to Bickerstaff that Jenny turns when she quarrels with Tranquillus; it is to Ironside that the Lizard children turn when they have problems; and Harriot cannot leave the city without a visit to the familiar home of Babble.

As the need for anonymity became less pressing, and as public attention was in evidence, the periodical writers directed their efforts with increasing zeal towards developing the other functions the family device could fulfill. As we consider how the family functioned as a device in the next chapter, we shall see the ways in which it helped maintain the readers' interest in the literary periodicals in which it appeared.

CHAPTER III

THE USE OF THE FAMILY DEVICE

It has been shown that each family occupied a central position of importance in the periodical in which it appeared. Whether it supplied a persona or mask for the true editor, or whether it was aimed at attracting attention to the paper, it was functionally designed within its literary context. Each editor introduced the purpose of his project in an early issue at the same time as he was concerned with establishing his own identity. We shall now consider the editorial intentions of the various papers to see how the families were used to further their ends. We shall see that the family device was a highly flexible one which allowed editors the journalistic freedom to combine various literary forms and techniques; it was a structural basis which offered the editors endless possibilities.

There is a noticeable similarity of intention found in the periodicals using the family as a device. They all, in varying degrees, state that they propose to instruct and entertain their readers. The aim of both instruction and entertainment seemed to be to humanize the middle class and generally to soften the underlying roughness of the age. It was an age of duelling, cock-fighting, bear- and bull-baiting and of atrocious crimes. J.H. Plumb, in

England in the Eighteenth Century (1714-1815), vividly describes

London life in the early part of the century:

Only about one child in four, born in London, survived. . . . In the midst of death, the people sought palliatives and found them in drink, gambling, and violence. The consumption of gin . . . was prodigious. . . . Virulent influenza epidemics also took their toll. Gambling was an antidote favoured by all classes of society; the wealthy favored stocks, cards, and lottery tickets; the poor, crown and anchor, pitch and toss, or bull baiting and cock fighting. Violence, born of despair and greed, belonged to the poor alone. London, Bristol, Liverpool . . . were better off because they had resident justices who could read the Riot Act, but even their forces for keeping order were pitifully inadequate, and burning, looting, and destruction by the mob were commonplaces of life.¹

Polite society was only a small part of a largely illiterate and crude populace.

Within the privileged middle and upper classes there were still signs of the two distinct and opposing camps of thought that divided English society after the Restoration. There was the staunch Puritan element on the one hand, with its grim and rigid moral stringencies, forbidding merriment and gaiety, and there was the Cavalier element, bawdy, immoral, and oblivious to social conventions. At the same time the pressures of urbanization, particularly in London, demanded that man be socially centered and learn to reconcile individual differences. After years of political and religious strife, some kind of compromise was needed to maintain the relatively new stability that society was able to enjoy. Harmony and order were goals to be sought in all avenues of life.

The essay periodicals directed their efforts along literary and social lines; thus the instruction and entertainment ~~were~~ most often

aimed at correcting manners and morals, and in shaping a criterion for good taste. Manners in the early eighteenth century were not merely what Peter Gay calls them today, "grace notes to conduct pleasing but by no means indispensable;"² they were the necessary element upon which a more stable society could be founded. Gay gives us an idea of what good manners did mean then:

In such a world, to have manners meant to reduce the amount of violence, to increase the amount of rational intercourse; to "give the wall" while walking in the streets of London, or to call an adversary in debate "Sir," was to avoid physical combat -- and more, it was to recognize others as human beings with rights of their own. In Addison's day, then, manners and morals were co-ordinate, allied, almost synonymous terms. . . . In a time when much was new and almost everything was uncertain . . . men needed guidance in all things, and few things, not even one's taste in dress or in opera, could be dismissed as a triviality.³

The most rhetorically eloquent and explicit statement of the intention to deal with manners and morals comes from No. 10 of the Spectator in which Addison wrote:

Since I have raised to myself so great an audience, I shall spare no pains to make their instruction agreeable, and their diversion useful. For which reasons I shall endeavour to enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality, that my readers may, if possible, both ways find their account in the speculation of the day. And to the end that their virtue and discretion may not be short, transient, intermitting starts of thought, I have resolved to refresh their memories from day to day, till I have recovered them out of that desperate state of vice and folly, onto which the age is fallen. The mind that lies fallow but a single day, sprouts up in follies that are only to be killed by a conscious and assiduous culture. It was said of Socrates, that he brought philosophy down from heaven, to inhabit among men; and I shall be ambitious to have it said of me, that I brought philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses.

Although the Spectator did not employ the family as a device, Addison's statement expresses generally the intent of the periodicals which did.

Each of the periodicals with which we are concerned was more or less devoted to the didacticism espoused by the Spectator, and reflected the concern of the age for social comment and reform. The desire to "enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality" was an attempt to find a via media, a position of compromise through temperance and moderation, by which the gulf existing between the various liberal and conservative elements of London society could be bridged.

Sir Eustace Locker of the Lay Monk describes one of the problems encountered in trying to find the golden compromise advocated by Addison, a compromise in which he, too, believed:

'Tis the Province of true Judgment, to discern the dissimilitude and different Natures of Things, that having a near Agreement and Resemblance to each other, are apt to impose upon undistinguishing and weak sighted Men, and appear to them the same: Parsimony and Avarice are endow'd with a Complexion and Features so like to those of Frugality, and Luxury and Profusion carry such a lively Appearance of Magnificence and Generosity; and, in short, every Vertue lying in the midst, between two extreams, has so much in common with each, that to the less discerning, 'tis difficult to abstract and separate their Ideas; a thousand Times we mistake one or the other, and bestow that Applause upon pretended Vertue, which is only due to the genuine and the real.

(No. 4)

It was the 'Province of true Judgment' which the editors of the periodicals tried to enter; the desire to reform without taking sides in issues of controversy was a difficult and ambitious goal to attain. That the editors were not always successful in preserving their neutrality partly explains the promise made by each family spokesman to be objective and impartial in his judgments, as he wished to offend nobody. Each editor was careful to justify, in jest or in seriousness, his position of responsibility.

The professed intentions of the editors varied in clarity and in emphasis. The Tatler gradually unfolds its purpose. Bickerstaff, as we saw in Chapter II, begins his introduction by asserting that the "end and purpose of this my Paper" is to instruct people in what to think. He allays the possible fear or suspicion of dullness by promising to be both amusing and entertaining, a promise he intends to fulfil by remembering the interests of the women, by his diverse subject matter written from the various coffee-houses, and by his powers of divination. But at the outset he is rather vague regarding his intention to reform; as his character develops, his intentions become increasingly evident. His concern with manners and morals is implicit in the continued moralizing on the social conduct and problems accompanying the activities, reports, and stories which he discusses from the different addresses.

There is more clarity of intention in Steele's statement of his purpose in the Guardian, owing probably to his experience with the Spectator in the intervening years. Ironside promises instruction and diversion, but how he will be diverting will be revealed as the paper progresses. He comes directly to the point concerning his ambition to reform as he says, "The main purpose of the work shall be, to protect the modest, the industrious; to celebrate the wise, the valiant; to encourage the good, the pious; to confront the impudent, the idle; to condemn the vain, the cowardly; and to disappoint the wicked and profane" (No. 1). He ends the paper with a statement which echoes Addison: "My design upon the whole is no less than to make the

pulpit, the bar, and the stage, all act in concert in the care of piety, justice, and virtue. . . . " He intends, then, to make all areas of life his concern; the pulpit, the bar, and the stage encompass the interests of the different types of people he aims to attract. His frankness is sincere for throughout the Guardian the serious intent never lies far beneath the surface of any discourse.

The dulce et utile theme is stated early in the Lay Monk as well, but the 'brothers' are as committed to each other's advancement as they are to the readers' moral and intellectual edification. After being assured that the men are indeed men of quality and "great Examples" in the first issue, we learn that the religious monks, upon whose cloistered life they plan to pattern their own, are an example by which they will "inspire the Soul with generous Sentiments and Divine Passions, to augment and refine our Ideas, and elevate the Mind to the greatest Heights of Science and Vertue" (No. 1); and with solitude favouring their design, they aim in seclusion to "pursue our Improvements" (No. 1). Each essay was planned for the promotion of "Learning, Vertue, Politeness or the Knowledge of Human Nature" (No. 1) and only those deemed beneficial for the public would be published.

While the introduction to the Lay Monk prepares its readers for the grave philosophical discourses which often follow, the Grumbler and the Prater are markedly less committed to weighty concerns. Although in the Grumbler some of Squire Gizzard's "grumbles" point out aspects of social behaviour in need of reform, he does not explicitly aim to instruct his readers. Nicholas Babble, editor of the Prater,

is too preoccupied with upholding his reputation as a facetious and entertaining companion in his introductory issues, and in promising to make his papers agreeable, to make any real pretense of an aim to instruct; diversion might at first seem his only aim, but the motto of the second number, "If Folly grows romantic, I must paint it" by Pope, indicates that a didactic undercurrent will emerge. As he is considerably less serious about his personal affairs than Ironside, he treats his duties as guardian to Harriot with a spirit of levity not often found in the other periodicals, and concerns himself more with petty foibles and vices. But as Gay points out, and as the second number of the Prater where Babble deals with unjustified and indecorous behaviour shows, the need for constructive criticism could be met at all levels.

Thus, each fictitious editor assumed responsibility for trying to shape, or at least to influence, the social behaviour of his readers. Yet, the commitment each made to divert and entertain, to make the medicine flavorful, made the task at hand a more demanding one, for if the charge of overpowering didacticism was to be avoided, ingenuity was a necessary concomitant in the endeavor. The family device was flexible enough to be used as that needed element which would unite instruction and entertainment while accommodating the creative instincts and various other more individual objectives of its editors. One of the most fundamental needs which it fulfilled was the human element. If meaning is to be understood in any message, moral or otherwise, a relationship must exist between the writer and the

reader. The relevancy of the topic must be established. Since the concerns of our editors were largely social, drawing a human bond was a logical and effective way to establish a reciprocal relationship.

Despite the eighteenth-century popularity of the coffee-house and club the family was still the most vital social institution. The existence of an editor in a family unit, with his pride in its accomplishments, his concern over its problems, and his familial obligations, provides a ready basis on which to relate to the reader. The empathy which arises is heightened when such virtues as a good sense of family responsibility are subscribed to and upheld by practice as in the actions of Bickerstaff and his followers; the reader is all the more prepared to put himself under the influence of such a devoted and virtuous man. And the feeling of empathy is further accentuated and reinforced when the family situation is a relaxed, comfortable, and happy one. Let us see how the editors of the papers with which we are dealing took advantage of the family as a means of establishing identity with the public, and provided the necessary conditions.

The well-planned fictitious family combined elements of an ideal family situation which most readers would wish for themselves, and realistic elements which would relate to their own family lives. In each of the papers the editor was part of a closely-knit, affectionate family community where mutual and sincere concern was essential to a basic understanding of individual differences in interest, personality and temperament. The strongest family tie in

the Tatler is between Isaac Bickerstaff and his sister, Jenny.

Evidence of their mutual trust is found as early as No. 10 when Bickerstaff leaves Jenny in charge of the paper:

My brother Isaac, having a sudden occasion to go out of town, ordered me to take upon me the dispatch of the next advices from home, with liberty to speak in my own way: not doubting the allowances which would be given a writer of my sex. You may be sure I undertook it with much satisfaction; and I confess, I am not a little pleased with the opportunity of running over all the papers in his closet, which he has left open for my use on this occasion.

One 'allowance' he probably expected is her disorganized manner which seems to account for her choosing from among the papers "The first that I lay my hands on. . . . a treatise concerning 'the empire of beauty.'" She pokes fun at him and his idealistic ideas about women and love as she calls his expectations "unreasonable" and says he is "of a complexion truly amorous; all his thoughts and actions carry in them a tincture of that obliging inclination." Her close relationship with Isaac makes her, in this as in the papers to follow, invaluable for increasing our knowledge of him, and in endearing him to his readers.

He shows his greatest concern and affection for her in his role of advisor in her marital affairs. In No. 79 he gives her some very fatherly advice just prior to her marriage to Tranquillus:

'Sister,' said I, 'you are now going from me: and be contented, that you leave the company of a talkative old man, for that of a sober young one: but take this along with you, that there is no mean in the state you are entering into, but you are to be exquisitely happy or miserable, and your fortune in this way of life will be wholly of your own making.'

He describes her on her wedding day with deep feeling holding a note

of sentimentality:

She was on her wedding-day three-and-twenty; her person is far from what we call a regular beauty; but a certain sweetness in her countenance, an ease in her shape and motion, with an unaffected modesty in her looks, had attractions beyond what symmetry and exactness can inspire, without the addition of these endowments.

He remembers to add that the wedding was entirely in his care. But the relationship between Bickerstaff and Jenny sometimes involves situations which demand great understanding and appreciation of each other's strengths and weaknesses. When Jenny and her husband quarrel (No. 85), Bickerstaff "perceived she was one of those ladies who begin to be managers within the time of their being brides." Before he would let her speak -- and he could see that she intended to -- he severely reprimands her for allowing such a quarrel to begin, regardless of what the cause may have been, and he warns her of the dire consequences of continual 'wrangling,' Both she and Tranquillus are grateful for his brief and appropriate words and they are again united.

Nestor Ironside has a larger immediate family in the Guardian than Bickerstaff in the Tatler. He considers all of the members of the Lizard family his responsibility, but he tells us in No. 5 that "the female part of a family is the more constant and immediate object of care and protection." Although he expresses a sincere fondness for all of the girls, the youngest, Mrs. Mary, whom he nicknamed 'Sparkler,' is his favorite:

If one can imagine all good qualities which adorn human life become feminine, the seeds, nay, the blossom of them, are apparent in Mrs. Mary. It is a weakness I cannot get over. . . . But I cannot resist

my partiality to this child, for being so like her grandfather; how often have I turned from her, to hide the melting of my heart when she has been talking to me! . . . if I am absent a day from the family, she is sure to be at my lodging the next morning to know what is the matter.

(No. 5)

Here we learn that as a daily visitor he sees his wards almost as often as if they were his own children. Evidence of their delight in his visits is found often, a good example being No. 43 in which we find Ironside at the Lizard home the morning after Lady Lizard and the girls have been at the theatre. They have taken great pains to keep their plans a secret so that they would surprise him with their talk, but Sparkler, true to character, has warned him in advance. The description of his arrival is an illustration of the domestic felicity he engenders. He finds "the whole company with a sublime cheerfulness in their countenance, all ready to speak to me at once. . . ." Yet for all the gaiety he could not help noticing that Annabella, sneering at their interest in the play, said little, and Sparkler had missed the main point of the drama. Ironside, like Bickerstaff, is aware of the weaknesses of his wards, but he is more expressive of affection in his interactions with them. He holds a position of trust in the eyes of the men of the family. In No. 26 he prints a letter to Harry Lizard who has asked for his help in finding a suitable mate:

Upon our last parting, and as I had just mounted the little roan I am so fond of, you called me back; and when I stooped to you, you squeezed me by the hand, and with allusion to some pleasant discourse we had had a day or two before in the house, concerning the present mercantile way of contracting marriages, with a smile and a blush you bid me look upon some women for you, and send word how they went. I did not see one to my mind till the last opera before Easter. I assure you I have been as unquiet ever since, as I wish you were till you had her.

He closes the letter by suggesting that Harry see her for himself when he comes to town. Ironside and the Lizards enjoy a comfortable relationship based on affection and respect. We are more conscious of such a bond throughout the paper than we are in the Tatler because of the larger family and Ironside's greater emphasis on it.

The group central to the Lay Monk is a brotherhood and does not, of course, lend itself to such family portraiture. Though Ravenscroft, the editor, does not assume a paternal role, he gives the paper a unity as he introduces most of the papers with comments, opinions and witticisms made in the house. Each member of the brotherhood enhances the group by his own unique personality. Ned Freeman, 'the man of the town' (No. 2) is the expert on women and all acknowledge the fact; Wimbleton is known for his easy nature and sense of humour which lead him to be the butt of a 'standing joke.' In No. 6 he had tried to negate the suspicions of neighbors, who thought the brotherhood was a Roman Catholic one, and who were attempting to barricade the Lay Monastery, by telling them that he was a loyal Protestant and that "he himself had narrowly escap'd the Inquisition in Italy, for telling unlucky stories of the Priests." After several promptings he tells his story, in No. 10, the most humorous to be found in the periodical. Such good-natured interaction is a significant part of the natural familiarity fostered by the fraternity. It is because of the frequency of this type of interaction that we become aware of the affection and concern that each member has for the others.

As much as Squire Gizzard in the Grumbler seems to be a humorous figure, laughter at him is mixed with respect, for many of his complaints are indeed valid ones. His half-brother Tom knows and understands his nature well. In No. 7 Tom chides him for his ill humour and tells him he should "be in a merry Humour like the rest of thy Neighbours." To remedy his brother's condition he recommends a well-spirited brandy drink for which he writes the recipe followed by a drinking song for which he records the words. His sister, Mrs. Martha who complains as much as her brother, is caught one day by him as she scolds her servant over a trivial matter. Gizzard tells us:

The Respect I always receive from our whole Kindred, both as an Author and as a Philosopher, prevailed upon my Sister to give over Expostulations upon the first Sight of me. When she had dismissed her Servant, I read her a very severe Lecture, for falling into so vehement and obstreperous a Passion upon so trivial an Occasion.

(No. 13)

Although Gizzard's authority in relation to his brothers and sisters does not need to be as firmly established as in papers with more didactic intentions, the familiarity that we see makes the family fiction a convincing one.

In the Prater Nicholas Babble and Harriot, his ward, share a mutual affection and respect, although it is not as fully developed as it might have been had the paper been longer than thirty-five numbers. Nos. 7, 13, 15 and 16 find Babble at ease among Harriot and her friends. She is the object of his concern regarding manners and morals and though he regards her follies and makes suggestions for her instruction, his aim is more to be entertaining than instructive.

Thus she does not warrant the more serious descriptions that Ironside, for example, makes of his relationship with the Lizards.

Each family atmosphere that we have considered created a feeling of solidarity, for there is always the knowledge that family ties are binding, lasting, and secure. Given such a solid base on which to construct a periodical fiction the paper could sustain a unity which would give the work a sense of direction and cohesion. And it was this unity of design and continuity that made the emergence and development of the literary periodical unique. We shall go on now to see the ways in which the editors made the solid family base diverting and entertaining while aiming to instruct.

The editors hoped to appeal to both young and old of both sexes. They hoped to discuss the arts and letters, morality and social conduct, philosophy, and events of topical interest. There was enough diversity among the members of the various groups for the families to participate in almost any issue which might evolve. There were two main ways to relate the family members to the topics discussed so that family interest could be maintained in the interest of moral edification and enlightenment. The first was by the editor's providing the opportunity for other members of the family to issue different articles, or by his relating the discourse from a first-person point of view. This manner of presentation usually takes the form of the essay and is used most often in the Tatler with Jenny Distaff in particular writing many articles of interest to the ladies in her brother's absence, and in the Lay Monk where it is initially

proposed that various members be responsible for writing essays. The second way was by means of the contrived letter written from one member of the group to another and often published ostensibly for public interest. All of the periodicals take advantage of the use of letters, and use them in many different ways. Since the essay is the most frequently used form for combining the instructive and diverting aspects of the topics of moral concern, the relation of the families to this form will be considered first.

Bonamy Dobrée points out in English Essayists the particular value of the essay in relating to contemporary thought in any age: "The writings of essayists, set down as they are for 'the common reader,' necessarily reflect the sort of thing most people are thinking about. They are a kind of barometer of popular educated opinion and feeling."⁴ With the eighteenth century's concern for social virtues, it followed naturally that the essays of the age would be adapted to moral concerns. The informal or familiar essay which was used so effectively by the periodical writers was one of the great literary developments of the age. Essayists such as Bacon had written volumes of essays prior to the eighteenth century, but they were most often highly formalized, overtly didactic, erudite, and rhetorical; they seldom aimed at the wide reading public for whom the Augustan essayists wrote.

Berguer, who extols Addison and Steele in particular, praises the aggregate contribution of the essay writers in the eighteenth century:

Numerous are the writers, ancient and modern, who have expatiated upon the loveliness of virtue, and exhibited the deformities of vice: many, the sages and moralists, who have passed their lives in pouring out instruction upon the world. . . . But they have appeared at long intervals, or in bulky volumes; unintelligible to the common reader from their learning, or inaccessible by their cost. The tediousness of some, and the asperity of more, defeated this laudable object; and thus was a barrier interposed between teacher and his disciple. . . . It was reserved for the BRITISH ESSAYISTS to level this barrier with the ground; and to accelerate, with a rapidity proportioned to its long retardation, the spread of popular improvement and amelioration. . . . casting themselves gracefully into the vortex of fashionable frivolities, (they) pretended to sail with the stream they stemmed. They alarmed no conscience, they wounded no pride; but insinuating rather than insisting, they masked their attacks under the semblance of an alliance, and made the self-love of individuals the strongest instrument of their conversion . . . they forced society to become its own correctress.⁵

Berguer's attitude reflects nineteenth-century literary criticism and opinion just as Dobrée's reflects that of the twentieth century.

Dobrée traces the general development of the essay, and then applauds the innovations made by Addison and Steele, who combined elements from the past, borrowed from recent journalism, and presented "the world to itself as it knew itself. It was a magnificent invention, a triumph of journalistic genius."⁶ Perhaps the greatest compliment to the style of an essayist comes from the great critic of his own age, Dr. Johnson, who commends the work of Addison for the laudable changes it effected in society and calls his prose "the model of the middle style." He says that "whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison."⁷

The range of topics discussed in the periodical essays makes any classification somewhat arbitrary, even within the realm of social

comment. The essays treat such general moral issues as goodness, truth and beauty, and they treat such social customs peculiar to that age as snuff-taking and button-pulling. The relaxed informality of the essays, written as they usually are in the first person, enhances the reader-writer relationship. Within such a flexible form the editor can express his own opinions, cite personal examples or support his ideas, and digress as he wishes. One common way of introducing an essay is to profess that the subject arose through conversation with members of the family, or else as a result of observing their actions. This kind of introduction encourages the reader to maintain his identity with the family fiction, for it shows that the editor is personally concerned or familiar with the vice or virtue under discussion, and not a detached condemner.

In No. 104 of the Tatler Steele writes on the beauty of love in marriage, a topic which arises from a conversation between Bickerstaff and Jenny. Jenny had come to her brother's apartment alone and he soon perceived that she had something serious to say: "However I was resolved to let her break into the discourse in her own way, and reduced her to a thousand little devices and intimations to bring me to the mention of her husband." She soon confides her problem to him:

"I have every thing," says she, "in Tranquillus, that I can wish for, and enjoy in him, what indeed you have told me were to be met with in a good husband, the fondness of a lover, the tenderness of a parent, and the intimacy of a friend. . . . I have only one fear hanging upon me, which is apt to give me trouble in the midst of all my satisfactions: I am afraid, you must know, that I shall not always make the same amiable appearance in his eye that I do at present. You know, brother Bickerstaff, that you have a reputation of a conjuror; and if you have any one secret in your art to make your sister always

beautiful, I should be happier than if I were mistress of all the worlds you have shown me in a starry night."

Bickerstaff replies "without recourse to magic" and gives Jenny the wise advice he feels she needs:

Endeavour to please, and you must please; be always in the same disposition as you are when you ask for this secret, and you may take my word, you will never want it. An inviolable fidelity, good humour, and complacency of temper, outlive all the charms of a fine face, and make the decays of it invisible.

He then goes on to tell a story from his own experience. He had once been present at the opening of a decayed coffin in which there were several letters to the deceased lady within it from her husband. Bickerstaff records one love letter written in courtship and then, another letter written after marriage during a short absence. The latter of the two professes a love and constancy that had augmented with the years, not declined. Bickerstaff provides an excellent illustration of the truth of his words by use of a concrete example. By introducing the topic through Jenny his sincerity is convincing and his point is more effective than a paper written in a more formal, third-person narrative style would have been.

In the Guardian Ironside makes Jack Lizard's return from university an occasion for a discourse on pedantry and the virtues of polite conversation. He is not without understanding when he comments on Jack's weakness:

Jack Lizard was about fifteen when he first entered in the university, and being a youth of a great deal of fire, and a more than ordinary application to his studies, it gave his conversation a very particular turn. He had too much spirit to hold his tongue in company; but at the same time so little acquaintance with the world, that he did not know how to talk like other people.

(No. 24)

After a year and a half at university Jack had come home for a visit; he enjoyed and took delight in exposing his sister's ignorance in matters familiar to him: "In short, no day passed over our heads, in which Jack did not imagine he made the whole family wiser than they were before." Ironside regards his ward with a paternal goodwill and concern: "I all this while looked down upon Jack as a young tree shooting out into blossoms before its time: the redundancy of which, though it was a little unseasonable, seemed to fortell an uncommon fruitfulness." Ironside takes Jack out one night, and on being given just enough advice to insinuate his weakness, the boy asks his guardian for more. The rules, "which may perhaps have contributed to make him the agreeable man he is now," uphold the virtues of humility and temperance. Ironside points out that the desire to inform or instruct is as important in conversation as it is in writing, and he advises:

If you resolve to please, never speak to gratify any particular vanity or passion of your own, but always with a design either to divert or inform the company. A man who aims only at one of these, is always easy in his discourse. He is never out of humour at being interrupted, because he considers that those who hear him are the best judges whether what he was saying could either divert or inform them. . . . I shall only add, that, besides what I have here said, there is something which can never be learnt but in the company of the polite. The virtues of man are catching as well as their vices; and your own observations added to these will soon discover what it is commands attention in one man, and makes you tired and displeased with the discourses of another.

At the same time that Ironside is diverting his readers with an intrinsically interesting story, he is giving instruction. Since Jack welcomes the advice and becomes more agreeable in following it, the readers are subtly persuaded that Ironside's point of view is the

right one and they, too, are influenced by his words.

Another way in which editors use family in the essays to divert and entertain their readers is by serializing papers. Not only do the same fictitious characters appear often in successive numbers, but often the topic of discussion is continued from one paper to the next. In No. 13 of the Prater Harriot, her friends and a suitor are discussing coquetry. Babble listens, and then instead of merely adding his opinion and advice, he tells a didactic tale on inner virtue and beauty. The moral of the story is obvious and no comments are made in that or the following number, but in the fifteenth issue the virtues of inner beauty are expounded upon again by a continuation of the tale. In No. 16 the auditors of the story air their sentiments regarding its value and its degree of relevance for them. Harriot's friends are very much on the defensive; their arguments are petty and point up the folly which started the issue. Harriot, however, concedes the moral of the story. In recording the varied responses, Babble is showing his readers a picture of themselves, for each of the various views presented would be shared by a large segment of his readers. The fact that Harriot accepts the wisdom of Babble's story tends to reinforce his position as guardian and thus increases his sphere of influence in the periodical.

The events of Jenny's marriage to which we have already referred are treated in a series of papers in the Tatler. We have already met Jenny often by No. 75 when Bickerstaff tells us: "I am called off from public dissertations by a domestic affair of great

importance, which is no less than the disposal of my sister Jenny for life." He describes the choice of matches in the Bickerstaff family, many of them unwisely made, only to stress the importance of choosing a mate carefully. He knows his sister is "as unspotted a spinster as any in Great Britain," but he also knows that her "only imperfection" is her vanity, a weakness he considers in finding a suitable husband:

In this disposal of my sister, I have chosen with an eye to her being a wit, and provided that the bridegroom be a man of a sound and excellent judgment, who will seldom mind what she says, when she begins to harangue: for Jenny's only imperfection is an admiration of her parts, which inclines her to be a little, but a very little sluttish; and you are ever to remark, that we are apt to cultivate most, and bring into observation, what we think most excellent in ourselves, or most capable of improvement. . . . For this reason I have disposed of her to a man of business, who will soon let her see, that to be well-dressed, in good humour, and cheerful in the command of her family, are the arts and sciences of female life.

Advice on marriage soon follows in No. 79 on the day of Jenny's wedding, and again in No. 85 when she has a quarrel with Tranquillus, her husband; he discusses the beauty of love in marriage in No. 104, as we have seen, and in No. 143 he warns Tranquillus of the danger of indulging her feminine weakness when she appears at his home in a chariot. In each of these papers Bickerstaff draws on the familiarity of an interesting family member to entertain and instruct his readers.

The same technique is used in the Guardian by Ironside.

Although Ironside has a larger family than Bickerstaff, and therefore more possibilities for serialization, he does not extend the use of serialized papers proportionately. A parallel between Bickerstaff's and Jenny's discussions of marriage and Ironside's and Sir Harry

Lizard's conversations or correspondences on the same subject is found in such papers as Nos. 6, 26, and 68. The intimacy of portraiture gained in this way recalls the success of serialized issues in the Spectator where many consecutive issues deal with aspects of one topic; we remember, for example, the many papers about Sir Roger de Coverley. Mr. Spectator introduces him in No. 1 as a gentleman whose "Singularities proceed from his good Sense, and are Contradictions to the Manners of the World, only as he thinks the World is in the wrong." He devotes Nos. 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, and 112 to 123 to de Coverley's way of life at home, and later he devotes consecutive issues to other of his interests.

The periodicals that use the family as a device do not have the degree of serialization found in the Spectator, but in these papers the use of recurring family personalities has a distinct advantage over the Spectator's. The family groups all have young ladies involved in fashion, courtship and marriage to speak of these things, rather than having them handled through a male representative of the fashionable world. Bickerstaff leaves a great number of the promised essays of particular interest to the ladies to Jenny. At the same time as she diverts the readers and gives the periodical an overall continuity, she enhances her brother's attempt to create a wider reading audience among the women of London. Her assumption of editorial responsibility on different occasions allows Steele and the other contributors an opportunity to express views other than those expected of Bickerstaff. In No. 33 she tells of her reason for

wishing to write:

My brother has made an excursion into the country, and the work against Saturday lies upon me. I am very glad I have got pen and ink in my hand; for I have some time longed for his absence, to give a right idea of things, which I thought he put in a very odd light, and some of them to the disadvantage of my own sex. It is much to be lamented, that it is necessary to make discourses, and publish treatises, to keep the horrid creatures, the men, within the rules of common decency.

The subject of the paper is the treatment of women by men, a subject on which she and her brother have had many differences of opinion:

My brother and I have at least fifty times quarrelled upon this topic. I ever argue, that the frailties of women are to be imputed to the false ornaments, which men of wit put upon our folly and coquetry. He lays all the vices of men upon women's secret approbation of libertine characters in them.

Reluctantly she concedes that her brother's opinions are meritorious:

"I did not care to give up a point; but, now he is out of the way,

I cannot but own I believe there is very much in what he asserted.

. . . " The self-righteousness which facilitates her gaining the confidence of the women is entertaining for the men, for it is as though they are able to eavesdrop in 'female territory' and they have no recourse but to listen even when they do not agree. By giving way to Bickerstaff's point of view in No. 33 she has actually drawn attention to his wisdom and authority.

Jenny points out in No. 36 that women naturally relate most subjects to their own interests (inadvertently supporting Bickerstaff's opinion of her vanity expressed at greatest length in No. 75), and she promises to treat her subject matter in a lively way:

History, therefore, written by a woman, you will easily imagine to consist of love in all its forms, both in the abuse of, and obedience to, that passion. As to the faculty of writing itself, it will not, it is hoped, be demanded that style and ornament shall be so much consulted, as truth and simplicity; which latter qualities we may more justly pretend to beyond the other sex: while, therefore, the administration of our affairs is in my hands, you shall from time to time have an exact account of all false lovers, and their shallow pretences for breaking off; of all termagant wives who make wedlock a yoke; of men who affect the entertainments and manners suitable only to our sex, and women who pretend to the conduct of such affairs as are only within the province of men. It is necessary farther to advertise the reader, that the usual places of resort being utterly out of my province or observation, I shall be obliged frequently to change the dates of places, as occurrences come into my way.

We see here an example of her loquacity as she rambles on before getting to the point of the paper, the proper behaviour for women at Epsom. We can see, too, that she assumes a defensive position in matters relating to her own sex and as the paper describes (in a letter to her) the indecorous behavior of some women, it is implied that such poor manners shed an unfair light on all of the female audience. Sometimes she criticizes both men and women as in No. 37 where she discusses the "sin of superfluous discourse." Jenny is in a better position to instruct her counterparts without giving offense than her brother; her role as narrator is an effective solution to the problem of reform with the female readers, for they are new to the popular reading public and must be delicately treated.

In none of the other periodicals do the women actually assume editorial responsibility as Jenny does in the Tatler, but they do play a significant role in initiating subjects of interest to women. In No. 46 of the Guardian, one of the many issues originating from Lady Lizard's tea-table, Ironside introduces a story of Madam Maintenon

(Francis Daubigné) at the request of Lady Lizard:

Yesterday, at my Lady Lizard's tea-table, the discourse happened to turn upon women of renown; such as have distinguished themselves in the world by surprising actions, or by any great and shining qualities, so as to draw upon themselves the envy of their own sex, and the admiration of ours. . . . This naturally led me to speak of Madam Maintenon; and, at the request of my lady and her daughters, I have undertaken to put together such circumstances of her life, as I had formerly gathered. . . .

The interest of Lady Lizard and the girls in a topic reassures the female readers that it should be of interest to them; the story he tells is instructive in the way in which it shows feminine virtue by example. In No. 155 Ironside discusses another subject of female interest, the usefulness of education to women. One reason he feels that women should be educated is that they lead a more 'sedentary life' than men and thus have more time for study and contemplation. He has observed a beneficial practice followed by Lady Lizard and her daughters:

The excellent lady, the Lady Lizard, in the space of one summer furnished a gallery with chairs and couches of her own and her daughters' working; and at the same time heard all Doctor Tillotson's sermons twice over. It is always the custom for one of the young ladies to read, while the others are at work; so that the learning of the family is not at all prejudicial to its manufactures. I was mightily pleased the other day to find them all busy in preserving several fruits of the season, with the Sparkler in the midst of them, reading over the Plurality of Worlds. It was very entertaining to me to see them dividing their speculations between jellies and stars, and making a sudden transition from the sun to an apricot, or from the Copernican system to the figure of a cheese-cake.

Through the example of the Lizards he shows the capabilities of women to learn to do many things and, especially, to enjoy themselves at the same time. He makes the education of women sound so pleasant that his female readers would probably not have taken offense at his second

reason for advocating it: that since women have such a "plenty of words" they should put them to good use!

Squire Gizzard does not discuss topics of particular interest to women often in the Grumbler, but when he does he uses his sister Martha as Ironside uses the Lizard girls. For example, in No. 16 he discusses the 'Cat-Call,' a topic which arises from Martha's recent visit to the theatre:

My Sister Martha went on Monday Night last to the Play-House in Lincolns-Inn-Fields; from thence she came to make me a visit, on purpose to inform me of the Tumult, which was raised there. . . . I have myself been several times a Witness to Disorders of the same Nature at the House in Drury-Lane, during the memorable Reign of the Mohocks; those merry Gentlemen were the great Improvers of the 'Cat-Call,' which, since the Fall of their Empire, has never been heard to squeak till the 9th Instant.

The discussion which follows is in a lighter vein than similar discussions of public indecencies in earlier papers. Babble had promised in No. 1 of the Prater to be "prodigiously entertaining" and the reappearances of Harriot help him to be just that. We have seen how Babble came to discuss inner virtue and beauty through his part in a discussion with Harriot, her friends and suitors (Nos. 13, 15, and 16). He finds her so entertaining that a visit from her and her friends can establish his mood for the day:

Their cheerful, prattle, however, diverted me so agreeably, that I was in a very pleasant mood the rest of the day. People may say what they will, but there is a charm in a Woman's Company, that makes a Man, aye, even an old Man, quite another thing.

(No. 20)

The Lay Monk, like the Prater and the Grumbler, captures the interest of women more for the purpose of entertainment than

instruction. No. 15 introduces the fraternity, and therefore the readers, to a new 'Society' of women who have joined together to form a 'Lay Nunnery.' Communication between the two groups is made entirely by means of letters which provide a vehicle for lively bantering. Of course it was Ned Freeman who discovered the group and the fact that he tried, as an imposter, to get into the 'Lay Nunnery' is confirmed by a letter from the Secretary, appropriately named Rebecca Single. He becomes increasingly involved with the new group as the periodical progresses and his escapades add to the enjoyment of the 'Brotherhood' as well as the readers.

Letters were not an innovation in the Lay Monk, however; letters appear frequently in all of the periodicals. They are but another way in which family and friends serve to divert the reader for the instructive ends of the editors. The letters often incite or stimulate discussion; in many issues the letter presented is the only news or observation given. The letters themselves are usually written in the informal or familiar essay style. They provide a variation on the predominant form of the periodicals, and they fit naturally into the context in which they appear. The most important role of the letters in terms of the family fiction is that of adding another dimension to the personality of the fictitious editor. The letters provide a means by which the editor can increase his contacts and interact with many types of people. As he is asked for advice or opinions, or else blamed or praised for ideas already presented, his credibility is reinforced and his position of authority is enhanced.

Isaac Bickerstaff carries on an active correspondence with relatives and friends. Often they serve to praise his paper and its effect on London society. In No. 71 Benjamin Beadlestaff commends him on his endeavours and points out the ways in which they have changed manners:

'The manners of our young gentlemen are in a fair way of amendment, and their very language is mightily refined. To them it is owing, that not a servitor will sing a catch, nor a senior fellow make a pun, nor a determining bachelor drink a bumper: and I believe a gentleman-commoner would as soon have the heels of his shoes red, as his stockings. . . .I congratulate you, my dear kinsman, upon these conquests; such as Roman emperors lamented they could not gain.'

No. 21 records a letter from Ephraim Bedstaff who compliments Isaac on his 'infallible' predictions and goes on to tell a story of topical interest about witchcraft. It is because of his recent success that D. Distaff sends him a genealogy of the Staffs in No. 11, and in No. 25 we find a letter from "Bread the Staff of Life" who, disgruntled because he was excluded from the list of relations in the genealogy, writes a poem, 'To Lewis Le Grand,' to prove his desire to acquaint himself with Bickerstaff. Nos. 25 and 28 of the Tatler are dedicated to the evils of duelling and in No. 29 another kinsman, Tom Switch, writes a letter supporting Bickerstaff's position on the controversial topic. Bickerstaff in turn commends Switch: "It is certain that Mr. Switch has hit upon the true source of this evil; and that it proceeds only from the force of custom, that we contradict ourselves in half the particulars and occurrences of life." But since Bickerstaff wants to seem humble in No. 38 Jenny publishes some letters "sent him for no other end, but to show the good effect

his writings have already had upon the ill customs of the age."

The first one begins: "'The end of all public papers ought to be the benefit and instruction, as well as the diversion of the readers; to which I see none so truly conducive as your late performances; especially those tending to the rooting out from among us that unchristian-like and bloody custom of duelling. . . .'" Bickerstaff learns, however, by way of a letter from a country cousin in No. 31, that his work is not understood or appreciated in the country. He is told: "' . . . you must be content with London for the centre of your wealth and fame; we have no relish for you. Wit must describe its proper circumference, and not go beyond it. . . .'" The letters help Bickerstaff maintain the fiction of the family at the same time as they draw attention to the general success of his paper.

In the Guardian John and Harry Lizard reside away from home. Through letters the boys remain part of the closely knit family circle, while at the same time they serve to introduce topics relating to their own occupations in life. In No. 26 Ironside writes to Harry describing a young lady he thinks suitable for him. In No. 68 Harry replies to his guardian and says that from what he has seen around him, he is no longer interested in marriage. His letter and Ironside's reply to it comprise the entire issue. The role of advisor which Ironside enjoys in relation to his ward, is made public for more universal benefit:

The paper of to-day shall consist of a letter from my friend Sir Harry Lizard, which, with my answer, may be worth the perusal of young men of estates and young women without fortunes. It is absolutely necessary, that in our first vigorous years we lay down some law to ourselves for the conduct of future life, which may at least prevent essential misfortunes. The cutting cares which attend such an affection as that against which I forewarn my friend Sir Harry, are very well known to all who are called the men of pleasure; but when they have opposed their satisfaction to their anxieties in an impartial examination, they will find their life not only a dream, but a troubled and vexatious one.

Harry condemns the vanity and ostentatious behaviour of women he has met and regrets that they might be considered prospects for marriage were it not for such weaknesses. Ironside is afraid that Harry is entertaining thoughts of an illicit affair, and he warns him of the hazards which could befall him. Ironside's letter in No. 68 is written as a self-contained essay. It is aimed at general moral instruction, but under the guise of family affairs it never attains the ascendancy of a sermon. The advice is more meaningful when it is presented in a context which the readers can identify with and understand.

In No. 59 William Lizard, "a fellow of All-souls" studying law, writes a long letter on the beauty of Cato who "improves our language, as well as our morals. . . ." John Lizard, the son taking holy orders, is also interested in the arts, and in No. 86 a letter from him is presented by itself without an introduction from Ironside. The letter is a self-contained essay in praise of the classical writers, and their descriptions of horses. In keeping with the eighteenth-century belief that the classics were desirable objects of imitation, John records his self-attained conclusion:

I am persuaded that they are fountains of good sense and eloquence; and that it is absolutely necessary for a young mind to form itself upon such models. For by a careful study of their style and manner, we shall at least avoid those faults, into which a youthful imagination is apt to hurry us; such as luxuriance of fancy, licentiousness of style, redundancy of thought, and false ornaments. . . . I have got over that childish part of life, which delights in points and turns of wit: and that I can take a manly and rational satisfaction in that which is called painting in poetry.

Here the views of John Lizard support and, hence, give added impetus to those expressed by Ironside in papers dealing with the arts and letters. And a paper penned by another familiar figure, in whom the readers are interested, adds variety to the presentation of essays.

In the Grumbler Gizzard introduces letters from his brothers to air complaints relating to their own misfortunes. He prints a letter from Hugh, his brother who resides on the family estate in the country in No. 9. In it Hugh grumbles about the mayor and the whole corporation. No. 13 finds Lionel, an unsuccessful lawyer, complaining in a letter to Squire Gizzard about the laws on treason. In the Lay Monk the letters to and from the 'Lay Nunnery' offset by their levity the many highly rhetorical and sometimes overly didactic essays of the periodical. In the Prater only two letters from relatives are printed. One, in No. 6, is from Babble's cousin, Martha Chatter who merely wants to tell Babble that she, too, wishes to talk in his paper at times; the second letter comes in No. 34 from a cousin descended from a branch of Babble's family in France. The cousin tells Babble that he does too much prating, and he warns him of his downfall. Babble's next issue is his last! In each periodical the number of letters from members of the family group do not

approach the number printed from friends and strangers, yet their importance cannot be underestimated. Interspersed as they are throughout the periodicals, they provide a continuity which is needed by bringing the editor and his family together. The flexibility of the letter in dealing with anecdotes, personal problems and serious stories, made it invaluable as a vehicle for diversion and instruction.

One aspect of the use of the family device is still to be considered. While keeping in mind the proposed function of the periodical, the true editors took advantage of their fictitious identities to further personal ends. The fictional element of the papers aroused curiosity over the true authorship, and the editors seemed to enjoy thoroughly the guessing game which the questions of their identities prompted. At various times the editors record comments made about them by friends who are unaware of their identity. And in the Guardian's No. 98 Ironside attributes part of his success to his relationship to Bickerstaff and Mr. Spectator:

The first who undertook to instruct the world in single papers was Isaac Bickerstaff of famous memory: a man nearly related to the family of Ironsides. We have often smoked a pipe together. . . .

The venerable Isaac was succeeded by a gentleman of the same family, very memorable for the shortness of his face and of his speeches. . . .

I, Nestor Ironside, have now for some time undertaken to fill the place of these my two renowned kinsmen and predecessors. For it is observed of every branch of our family, that we have all of us a wonderful inclination to give good advice, though it is remarked of some of us, that we are apt in this occasion, rather to give than take.

This was a broad hint implying that he was in fact a persona for Steele and Addison, for when the Tatler had come to a final close, Steele dropped his mask, and addressed his audience in his own person:

I am now come to the end of my ambition in this matter, and have nothing further to say to the world under the character of Isaac Bickerstaff. This work has, indeed, for some time, been disagreeable to me, and the purpose of it wholly lost, by my being so long understood as the author. . . . I shall not carry my humility so far as to call myself a vicious man, but at the same time must confess my life is at best but pardonable. And, with no greater character than this, a man would make but an indifferent progress in attacking prevailing and fashionable vices, which Mr. Bickerstaff has done with a freedom of spirit, that would have lost both its beauty and efficacy, had it been pretended to by Mr. Steele.

(No. 271)

But in the Guardian, to confuse the suspicion of his identity, Steele addresses Ironside under his own name. On introducing a letter written by Steele concerning his enemy, the Examiner, Ironside remarks:

This Steele is certainly a very good sort of man, and it is a thousand pities he does not understand politics; but, if he is turned out, my Lady Lizard will invite him down to our country house. I shall be very glad of his company, and I'll certainly leave something to one of his children.

(Guardian, No. 53)

To carry the question of identity farther, curiosity is aroused over whether or not the objects of some of the satires and criticisms are indeed references to specific men. While in many cases they undoubtedly are, Bickerstaff defends his use of satire:

It is much to be lamented, that a man must use a certain cunning to caution people against what it is their interest to avoid. All men will allow, that it is a great and heroic work to correct men's errors, and at the price of being called a common enemy, to go on being a common friend to my fellow subjects and citizens. But I am enforced in this work to revolve the same thing in ten thousand lights, and cast them in as many forms, to come at men's minds and affections, in order to lead the innocent in safety, as well as disappoint the artifices of betrayers.

(Tatler, No. 76)

In the same issue Bickerstaff prints a letter which commends him on his work and supports his position. The following lines from the

letter hold true for all of the periodicals using satiric portraiture:

I always looked upon satire as the best friend to reformation, whilst its lashes were general. . . . A general representation of an action, either ridiculous or enormous, may make those wince who find too much similitude in the character with themselves to plead not guilty; but none but a witness to the crime can charge them with the guilt, whilst the indictment is general, and the offender has the asylum of the whole world to protect him. Here can be no injustice, where no one is injured; for it is themselves must appropriate the saddle, before a scandal can ride them.

Both editors and the objects of their raillery, then, were most often unidentified, and the question of identity provided the most diversion for those rival editors, who wished to know the sources of the writings, and the literary friends of the editors whose suspicions were apt to be well grounded. The curiosity became for the most part, an 'in-crowd' game, which could be enjoyed by the true editors in their daily lives.

The anonymity also allowed the editors to applaud their own efforts, and to encourage those of their friends. Ironside tells us in No. 98 of the Guardian that he looks upon his paper as do the other editors, as a "kind of nursery for authors," a kind of testing ground for potential talent. Some of the contributors such as Pope were no mean amateurs and used their issues unabashedly to promote their own work. For example, Pope was the author of Guardian No. 40, in which he, under the guise of Ironside, answers to the charge of neglect in leaving himself (Pope) out of a discussion of pastorals, and he goes on to extol his own work at the expense of Philips. Other papers promote plays, books, and verse of contemporary men of letters. The added mystique surrounding the editors attracted the attention,

and added to the enjoyment of the papers for the smaller circle of wits who understood something of what went on behind the scenes prior to publication.

The editors seemed to take a great deal of personal pride in their ability to amuse the readers. When wit fails the editor may, like Bickerstaff in Tatler No. 217, promise to be wittier, or excuse himself from the charge of dullness by declaring "there is a design in it." But by far the most entertaining papers in all the periodicals are those wherein the editors and their families predominate and assume an intrinsic interest. The reader is often aware that the editor is baiting him for more serious issues. We can recall here Bickerstaff's record of the marital affairs of Jenny which provide discussion of marriage, or Ironside's discussions of Cato introduced by way of the Lizard children. When we consider how virtuous a woman Lady Lizard is and we recall that she is often a good example of acceptable behaviour, just as her sons provide examples of worthy pursuits in the world, it may seem that the contrived fiction is too obvious in fulfilling its functions. But as each character with whom we become familiar is characterized by his own interests and peculiarities, he becomes a friend, and we are anxious to hear more of his affairs. We soon come to admire his virtues and laugh at those follies that we find in ourselves.

We have seen that the nature of the use of the family as a device was mainly that of attaining public attention. The device was flexible enough to allow the editors ample scope to vary their

techniques and subject matter for the ends of both entertainment and instruction. In Chapter IV we shall see how effective the device was, and we shall see how it compared to the use of the club as a device; as we try to account for its demise, we shall look beyond the use of the device to consider the developments which followed in its wake.

CHAPTER IV

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FAMILY DEVICE

The use of the family as a device in the periodicals was designed to lure readers into all the realms of thought that the editors considered would benefit the readers in their daily lives. On considering the areas deemed important and on considering the way in which they were approached in the periodicals, we find the treatment of society uniquely adapted to the Augustan age. A.R. Humphreys, author of The Augustan World, is especially interested in the relationship between society and the literature of the age. He writes:

Literature has always dealt with social life. Is there anything particular about its Augustan interests? Three points perhaps call for attention: first, that writers take as their main material man in society, not man as an individual soul faced with fateful metaphysical problems, or as a seeker for personal experience, an asserter of self; second, that man and society are shown in normal size and proportion, in normal concerns and aspirations, not as exceptional; and third, that the aspects of life treated in literature tend towards a family resemblance.¹

These points are exemplified in the works which have formed the basis of our study. The editors of the papers which used the family device recognized the value of combining moral teaching and diversion. They achieved a great literary effectiveness or appeal to the readers then and now, perhaps mainly because of the readableness of the papers. Suited as they were to public tastes, it is not surprising that the

periodicals met with such favorable public response, and that the Tatler and the Guardian, in particular, continued as long as they did.

In my introduction I expressed the contention that the family is potentially more valuable as a device than the club. The greatest advantage of the family's role in our papers is its universality of appeal. Everyone can relate to and identify to some degree with the relationship between Bickerstaff and Jenny, Ironside and the Lizard family, or Babble and Harriot, since family relationships are a part of everyone's experience. The club is an exclusive grouping to which, however popular it might be at any given period, only certain segments of the public can relate. The permanence of the family as a formative social institution gives it a potential timelessness which can appeal to futurity without demanding an understanding of current social trends and practices.

The family is a highly flexible device; without going beyond its members it can embrace the interests of men and women both married and unmarried, young and old, and it can encompass any or all of the activities and emotional states of man's existence. We have seen how Jenny writes many of the papers in the Tatler which deal with subjects of interest to women such as the treatment of women in No. 33, and her discussion of the use of speech in No. 37. Her marriage provides Bickerstaff with a basis for discussions on marriage and courtship. He introduces cousins whenever they can further a point and at the same time further his developing fiction. The Lizard family offers even greater possibilities for discussions because it includes Lady

Lizard, four sons and five daughters. There are great differences in the temperaments and interests of the girls; for example, Jane is known for her piety and domesticity, Cornelia for her seriousness and interest in reading. There are great differences among the boys of the family as well; Sir Harry is a country gentleman, William studies law, and John is preparing to take holy orders. Almost any topic could be introduced by the family. The club is self-restricting; each club is limited in membership to one sex and usually to similar types of people who engage in or share a common set of interests. As different from one another as the members of the Spectator Club are, they all are adults and males. Often the club must go outside its own limits to include the other sex, or deal with subjects foreign to its nature. The club, then, as a device must seem more contrived than the family. An example of this may be seen in the Lay Monk as it attempts to combine the possibilities of both devices. In a brotherhood of single men, committed as they are to serious and instructive ends, the introduction of articles of interest to the ladies and the need to divert and entertain the readers pose a problem. The problem is partly overcome by the inclusion of Ned Freeman in the group, and by the creation of the sisterhood of lay nuns. But Ned Freeman, entertaining though he is, adds nothing to the credibility of the group as a whole, and the sisterhood, while entertaining and supplying the needed female interest, appears contrived and overtly functional from its inception.

The fictitious diversity of the family members allows the actual diversity of the contributors to emerge and give depth and authenticity to the topic at hand. While the general emphasis in all of the periodicals is on contemporary manners and morals, there are a great number of papers that deal with other areas of eighteenth-century life. An interest of the age which Steele pursues in a considerable number of essays is the renewed interest in the theatre. His essays dealing with the theatre include criticism of productions and actors as well as of the audiences. In many of these papers he uses family members to provide variety in approach or relief from didacticism. In No. 184 of the Tatler, a paper by Steele, Bickerstaff announces that Jenny and her husband will attend a play with him. He then comments on the appropriate dress for the theatre. No. 43 of the Guardian, another paper by Steele, finds Ironside listening to Tom Lizard and his sisters discuss Cato, Addison's play. John Hughes, another contributor interested in the theatre, discusses Othello in No. 37 of the Guardian through the views of the Lizard girls. Steele's involvement in the theatre gives him a basis for enlightened judgment and criticism. He refers to the classics and earlier English and continental stage history, yet his erudition does not go beyond the bounds of natural family discussion. His essays which deal with the theatre are often simply for the encouragement of a particular play of the day rather than for the instruction of the readers on stage history in general. Whenever he introduces a family member his main point becomes especially relevant to the reader.

The veneration of the classical writers characterizing the age is found in the periodical essays dealing with the arts and letters. In Nos. 59 and 86 of the Guardian William and John Lizard praise the ancient writers, but the greater number of parallels and comparisons made between the Ancients and Moderns are written by the editor of the paper alone. There are several other topics of particular concern to contributors which are introduced with little or no reference to the family members who share the same interest. Although the periodicals eschew discussion of religious biases and promise to offend no religious group, there are many essays in the Guardian written against the freethinkers and their liberal views. Nos. 70, 77, 83, and 88 for example, are the contributions of Bishop George Berkeley. In them he expounds upon the principles of Christianity and defends Christian ideals, ridiculing what he considers the unreasoned thought of the freethinkers. His essays are serious and philosophical, possibly too didactic for the average reader.

The approach taken in the paper to marriage and courtship, potentially didactic subjects, introduced as they are through the family, is in direct contrast to Berkeley's approach to religion. Even Steele's essay on improper conduct at church achieves an easy acceptance as he includes in his discussion the entrance of one of Lady Lizard's daughters (No. 65). John Lizard, with his knowledge and vocational interest in religion, would have been an obvious vehicle for papers dealing with religion, but it is probable that Berkeley was more interested in his message than in the continuation of the

family fiction. Here is an instance where a potential use of the family as a device is not developed.

The use of the family as a device in all of the periodicals is intermittent. The Tatler is a fresh and witty experiment in which the introduction of family provides a continuity for the fictional framework. Jenny provides a basis for discussion of female concerns, but she is the only well-known relative to appear. The more distant relations are introduced at various times through letters or references by Bickerstaff. While they do not hold the intrinsic interest that Jenny does, they support, emphasise or comment on the points that Bickerstaff makes. Bickerstaff, intending to write as he did from various coffee-houses, did not seem to intend initially to develop the family fiction. With only one close relative he is limited by her age, sex, and interests in the range of topics which can arise naturally through their conversations.

The Guardian as we have seen is the chief exponent of the device. As Ironside introduces his large family it is at once apparent that he intends to make frequent use of its members. His fiction is so convincing and so intrinsically interesting, and the essays in which the Lizards appear are so much less didactic than those in which they do not, that much of it is as good as the Spectator. Coming after the model as it does, much of the excellence of the Guardian has not been recognized. Perhaps the weakness of the paper is that it does not use the family more often. It may be that there are too many Lizard children for any of them to establish as

easy a manner of communication with the public as Jenny. Another point which may partly explain the lack of attention given to the family in later issues of the paper is the fact that Addison who writes a good many of them seldom makes use of the family. There are no papers by Addison until No. 67. He appears again as a contributor for No. 96 after which he writes all of the papers up to and including No. 124; he contributes twenty-three more before the concluding No. 176. Since Addison married late (in 1716 at the age of 44) and his only child was not born until 1719, he may have felt unequal to handling the family device. Certainly his use of it is less frequent than Steele's. Throughout the periodical papers are contributed by friends such as Berkeley, Hughes, and Pope. These contributors seldom use the family and when their papers precede or follow Addison's the fiction loses some of its strength and the essays appear more as individual and unrelated units rather than as integral parts of a whole.

The Lay Monk combines the advantages of the club and the family but does not rival the success of either the Spectator or the Guardian. The brotherhood has a wide variety of interests in its membership and its original plan of each member submitting articles is a good one. Through such a plan a good selection of light and serious essays emerges. The lay nunnery, though not as natural or as convincing in the introduction of matters relating to women as Jenny or the Lizard girls, is a solution to the problem of how to attract the female readers. None of the brothers receives the highly

individualized portraiture of Sir Roger de Coverley or Will Honeycomb in the Spectator. Whether the fact that the individuals in the group are less developed is a cause or a result of the short run of only forty papers is difficult to say, yet the value of the device is great in making the papers enjoyable to read.

The use of the family in the Grumbler was incidental in comparison with the other papers. The relatives of the editor serve mainly to further the humour of perpetual grumblings by their attempt to rival his ability to complain. They do not directly communicate with the public as Jenny does nor do they form a well-known frame of reference for discussions as the Lizards do. The Prater is a better exponent of the device than the Grumbler, for Nicholas Babble has only one close ward, Harriot. His essays are on the whole lighter in content and more entertaining than those of the earlier papers, and while Harriot provides continuity by the convincing fiction of her existence, her use for relief from didacticism or to further a point is less important than in the Tatler or the Guardian. In the Prater we again see, however, the advantage of having a young lady speak of fashion and other subjects of interest to women. As each paper differs in emphasis from those before it, the function of the family in each is in the service of different ends.

One way of estimating the popularity of the papers is by noting the large number of minor periodicals which appeared in imitation of the more successful ones. George Marr tells us: "So much interest was taken in the Tatler that it was reissued in

Edinburgh by James Watson . . . (who) seems to have started with the issue of Steele's No. 130, and numbered it No. 1."² It is, he goes on to say, an almost exact reprint, and shortly after the last issue of the Tatler Watson started a direct imitation which he called the Tatler, by Donald Macstaff of the North. He follows the pattern of the original Tatler, its subject matter, and even includes a sister, Mary Macstaff, in imitation of Bickerstaff's half-sister Jenny. Another imitation of the Tatler was the Female Tatler which ran for one hundred eleven numbers, from July 1709 to March 1710. Mrs. Crackenthorpe, the persona of editor Thomas Baker, is the counterpart of Bickerstaff and despite claims to the contrary, she follows his line of emphasis from essays on duelling to satire on dress. The other characters in the paper are not as individually developed or naturally sustained as those appearing in the original, however, and the paper is now only historically significant.³ The degree to which the Lay Monk, the Grumbler, and the Prater used the fiction established before them renders them imitative, but their success is attributable to the fact that they added ingenuity to adaptation.

Writers, critics, and historians since the eighteenth century have recognized and applauded the contributions made by the periodical essayists in the reformation of Augustan attitudes. The praises point to the effectiveness of the family as a device in those periodicals in which it appeared, for the fiction, as we have seen, made the

instruction possible. But it is the Spectator, which used the club as its fictitious framework, that has gained by far the greatest acclaim. One of the most probable reasons to account for its ascendancy over the other periodicals is the unique collaboration of Addison and Steele. In no other periodical did they complement each other so well. Addison supplied the literary criticism, the organization, and the planning, the want of which was evident in the Tatler and the Guardian. And Steele retained all of his wit and vitality. The Spectator, too, transcended the limitations of the club device. Mr. Spectator was the most 'shadowy' and seemingly unobtrusive of the personae we have met, going from place to place and silently observing all that passed before him. He limited himself to the club members only in regard to open communication and social interaction; the world was his stage. Following as he did his original editorial policies with a consistent and regular high quality of publication, instead of changing mid-way as Bickerstaff had in the Tatler, made him all the more convincing as a character, and his supporting fiction, less artificial. Although the fiction of the Spectator followed naturally upon journalistic endeavors of the past, and as a natural outgrowth of present social conditions, the use that was made of the club was revolutionary enough for it to be considered new. Its immediate success and long period of publication were factors which protected it from any serious rival publications which hoped to overshadow or imitate it. The Tatler lacked the Spectator's consistency and direction; the Guardian lacked its

freshness; the Lay Monk appeared much more contrived, and the Prater made no pretence of attempting the intricate balance of gravity and wit maintained by the Spectator. Though no eighteenth-century periodical reached the consummate achievement of the Spectator, and though the potential of the family device was never as fully developed as that of the club in the latter periodical, the periodicals we have dealt with stand on their own merit as a highly effective and influential body of work.

The Prater of 1756 marked the demise of the family device, but its decline was that of the essay periodical in general. As the century wore on, new forms began to gain public attention, and the limitations of the literary periodical were not turned to the advantage of the new editors as they had been in the hands of the earlier editors. The use of the periodical for moral instruction became laboured with less skilful writers and people began to look elsewhere for edification and enlightenment. In 1795 the author of the Monthly Mirror commented on the condition of the periodic press and wrote: "Periodical publications are daily coming into disgrace. The moral and intellectual world were never so enlightened and improved as when Addison, Steele, and others gave their lucubrations to the public. The form, the method, the system remained, but the animation, the genius, the soul were fled."⁴ Individual aspects of the periodicals were developed along new lines.

The extent of influence wielded by the group of periodicals considered is difficult to determine with any degree of certainty

since so many non-literary factors are brought to bear in any change, but we can see the use of the familiar essay developed in the hands of Lamb, Hazlitt, and Hunt outside the bounds of the periodical. Periodicals did not cease to exist in the eighteenth century, but they developed into magazines and reviews which maintained the periodicity if not the serialized form or subject matter of the earlier works. The characterization of the fictitious families was to be seen again in the eighteenth-century novels of Richardson, Fielding, and Sterne. The use of the novel by authors such as Austen and Dickens to make social comment may well have been a result of the developments following in the wake of the essay periodicals. Certainly the periodicals have contributed greatly to our social and intellectual history by providing an invaluable document of life in Augustan London. The use of the family as a device made it possible for these periodicals to register the attitudes, the thoughts, the interests, and the philosophy of an age in a manner which has not only immeasurable historical and social value, but also intrinsic interest for scholars of the eighteenth century and common readers of the twentieth. For these periodicals are still able to delight readers; much of the pleasure they give is undoubtedly due to the use of the family device.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

¹Bond, "Introduction," Studies in the Early English Periodical, 3.

²Berguer, "Preface to the Tatler," The British Essayists, I, vi.

³Bond, 4.

⁴Ibid., 16-17. See also Graham, English Literary Periodicals, 22-23.

⁵Bond, 4.

⁶Humphreys, The Augustan World, 7.

⁷Ibid., 18.

⁸Allen, The Clubs of Augustan London, 152.

⁹Bond, 16.

¹⁰Ibid., 16.

¹¹Marr, The Periodical Essayists of the Eighteenth Century, 14.

¹²The Athenian Oracle:

i. II, 161.	iv. 248.
ii. 147-148.	v. 240.
iii. 71.	vi. 128.

The Athenian Oracle is a collection of questions and answers from the old Athenian Mercuries which began publication in 1690. The odd variety of questions it contains shows how much the readers wanted to learn and to read about things other than news. Beljame in Men of Letters in the Eighteenth Century, 257 calls the original Mercury of Dunton the first literary journal in England.

¹³Allen, 153-155.

¹⁴Ibid., 198.

¹⁵Ibid., 188-201.

¹⁶Addison, Spectator, No. 10 (March 12, 1711).

CHAPTER II

¹In the "Preface to the Octavo Edition, 1710" of the Tatler (The British Essayists, I), Steele acknowledged the assistance given him by other writers. He did not name Addison who wished to remain as anonymous as possible, but referred to him specifically when he wrote:

But I have only one gentleman, who will be nameless, to thank for any frequent assistance to me, which indeed it would have been barbarous in him to have denied to one with whom he has lived in an intimacy from childhood, considering the great ease with which he is able to despatch the most entertaining pieces of this nature. This good office he performed with such force of genius, humour, wit, and learning, that I fared like a distressed prince, who calls in a powerful neighbor to his aid; I was undone by my auxiliary; when I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him.

²Chalmers, "Preface to the Spectator," The British Essayists, VI, xlii-xliii. The Spectator was resumed by Addison again in 1714 to run from Numbers 556 to 635, a stretch generally referred to as Volume 8.

³Citations from and references to the Spectator in my text are to the Spectator, ed. Bond, I-V.

⁴Another character who appears frequently throughout the Spectator papers is Will Honeycomb. We are told in the introduction to him (No. 2) that "all his conversation and knowledge has been in the female world." His opinions and exploits are recorded whenever his familiarity with women can add humour or authority to a discussion of wits, fashions, or marriage. He enjoys a carefree life as a 'man of the town,' and the Spectator tells us that "Will reckons every misfortune that he has met with . . . as parts of his education; and fancies he should never have been the man he is, had he not broke windows, knocked down constables, disturbed honest people with his midnight serenades, and beat up a lewd woman's quarters, when he was a young fellow" (No. 105). Whether he is describing his adventures with a 'Pict' (No. 41), bragging about his insights into gallantry

(No. 265), or triumphing over his success with rich widows (No. 311), he presents a consistent image of a confirmed bachelor. But in No. 530 the fiction which has evolved around the life of Will Honeycomb takes a surprising turn; the narrator tells us that finally "the gay, the loud, the vain Will Honeycomb, who had made love to every great fortune that has appeared in town for above thirty years together, and boasted of favours from ladies whom he had never seen, is at length wedded to a plain country girl."

Moreover Mr. Spectator himself sustains a consistent fiction. The papers which deal with him personally often revolve around his editorial endeavors: the design of his writings (Nos. 10, 16), their success and the responses they receive (Nos. 10, 131, 367), and the contributions made by both club members and the general public. His taciturnity is the one eccentricity which occasions frequent self-justification and humorous speculations by others regarding his character; at the same time it enables him to observe much of what would go otherwise unnoticed. Although he imposes himself directly on his readers often enough to become a familiar figure, his relationships with the other club members, and his accounts of their activities and conduct serve as a vehicle for self-revelation and reflection. When he is invited to spend a month in Sir Roger's country home (No. 106), he accepts, for "Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my humour, lets me rise and go to bed when I please, dine at his own table or in my chamber as I think fit, sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. . . . I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons." Thus the original conception of him as an independent man with a disinclination to talk is reinforced by the reports he gives of his own reactions and sentiments. Judgments on others reflect his own values, and the above-mentioned sobriety of de Coverley's household implies, for example, that he favors conservatism and is probably himself a sober and staid person. Simple actions or activities are often the basis for considerations of greater depth. The manner in which he is received at his friend's home sets the basis for an essay on the relationship between masters and servants; he begins No. 107: "The reception, manner of attendance, undisturbed freedom and quiet, which I meet with here in the country, has confirmed me in the opinion I always had, that the general corruption of manners in servants is owing to the conduct of masters." He then moves from the specific and particular to a more general discussion. As the Spectator goes on and the character of the narrator is firmly established there is far less emphasis on personalities. Mr. Spectator's essays are more directly presented, and are often introduced by a statement of a brief maxim, or moral truth which he goes on to support, or a reflection upon a vice which has attracted his attention.

⁵Citations from the Tatler in my text are to The British Essayists, ed. Ferguson, I-V.

⁶The poem, like other accounts such as his report on the comedy The Country Wife, of No. 3, upholds the neo-classical virtue of combining pleasure and instruction. Fact is often followed by didactic insinuation or comment and the 'dulce et utile' principle put into practice enables him to assume a role of public censor with regard to manners and conduct. He is quick to point out what he fears the readers may miss:

The poet, on many occasions, where the propriety of the character will admit of it, insinuates that there is no defence against vice but the contempt of it; and has, in the natural ideas of an untainted innocent, shewn the gradual steps to ruin and destruction which persons of condition run into without the help of a good education to form their conduct.

He commends it as a "very pleasant and instructive satire" which leads in turn to his opinions on the necessity for a "well-bred audience."

⁷In his "Preface to the Octavo Edition, 1710," V, Steele says the genealogy of the family was written by a Mr. Twisden who died at the Battle of Mons.

⁸Citations from the Guardian in my text are to The British Essayists, ed. Ferguson, XVI-XVIII.

⁹This paper was written by John Hughes, co-editor of the Lay Monk. Hughes was very active in the theatre.

¹⁰Quoted in Allen, 152.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 210. Addison replied to Hughes on October 12 as follows:

"I am very much obliged to you for your kind letter and the specimen, which I read over with great pleasure. . . . But to tell you truly, I have been so taken up with thoughts of that nature for these two or three years last past, that I must now take some time 'pour me delasser,' and lay in fuel for future work."

¹²All references to the Lay Monk are from the original issues by Blackmore and Hughes, Nos. 1-40 (November 16, 1713 - February 15, 1714).

¹³Allen, 215: From The Letters of Thomas Burnet to George Duckett, ed. D. Nicol Smith (Oxford, 1914), 76-77.

¹⁴References to the Grumbler are from the original issues by Burnet and Duckett, Nos. 1-34 (February 24, 1715 - July 15, 1715).

¹⁵Allen, 217.

¹⁶All references to the Prater are from the original issues by J. Holcombe, Nos. 1-35 (March 13, 1756 - November 6, 1756).

CHAPTER III

¹Plumb, England in the Eighteenth Century (1714-1815), 13.

²Gay, "The Spectator as Actor: Addison in Perspective," The Augustan Age, ed. Watt, 287.

³Ibid., 288.

⁴Dobrée, English Essayists, 17.

⁵Berguer, "Preface to the Tatler," The British Essayists, I, xiii-xiv.

⁶Dobrée, 17.

⁷Johnson, "Life of Addison," Lives of the English Poets, I, 466.

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¹Humphreys, 42.

²Marr, 29.

³Allen, 203-5.

⁴Marr, 247.

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